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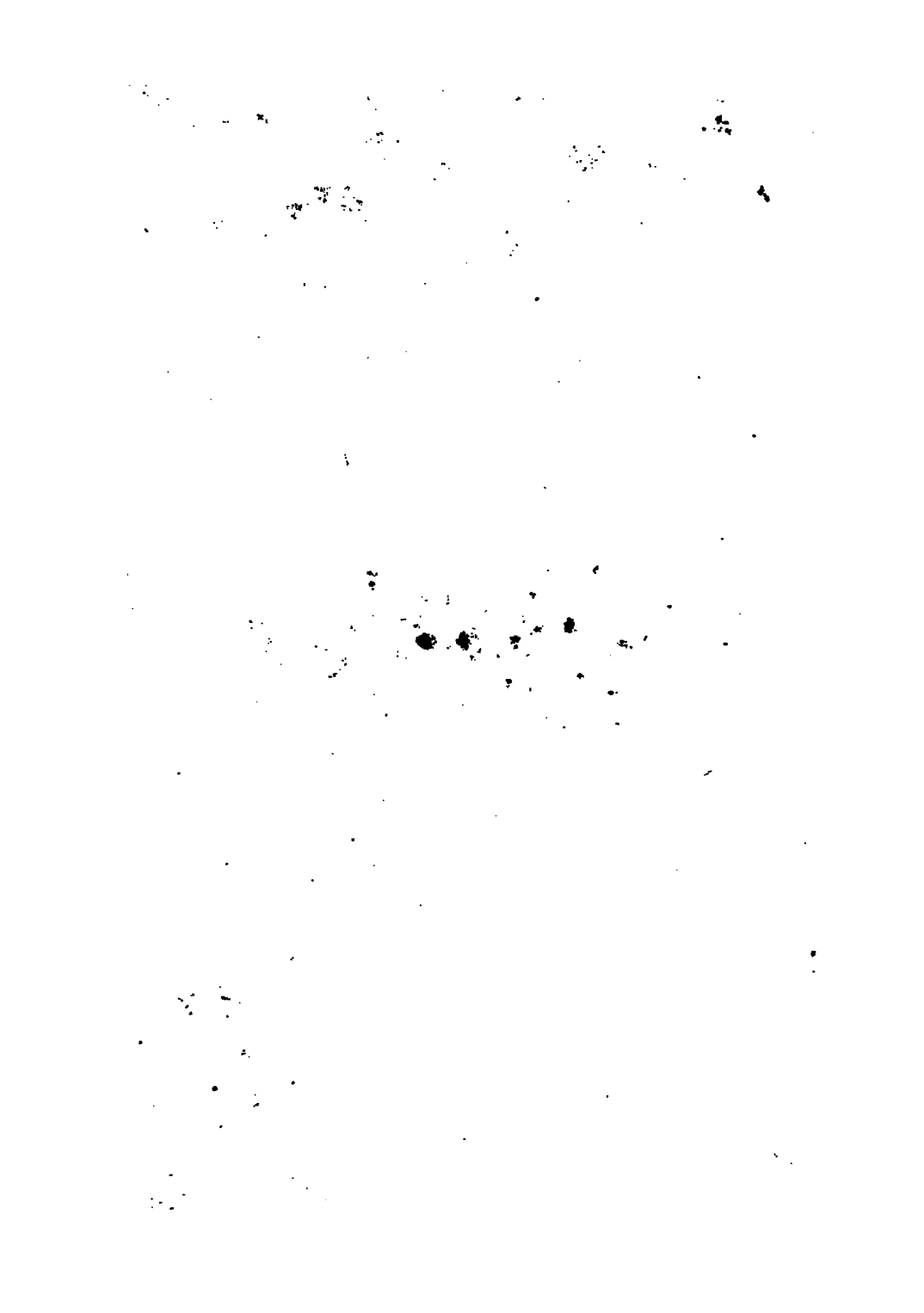
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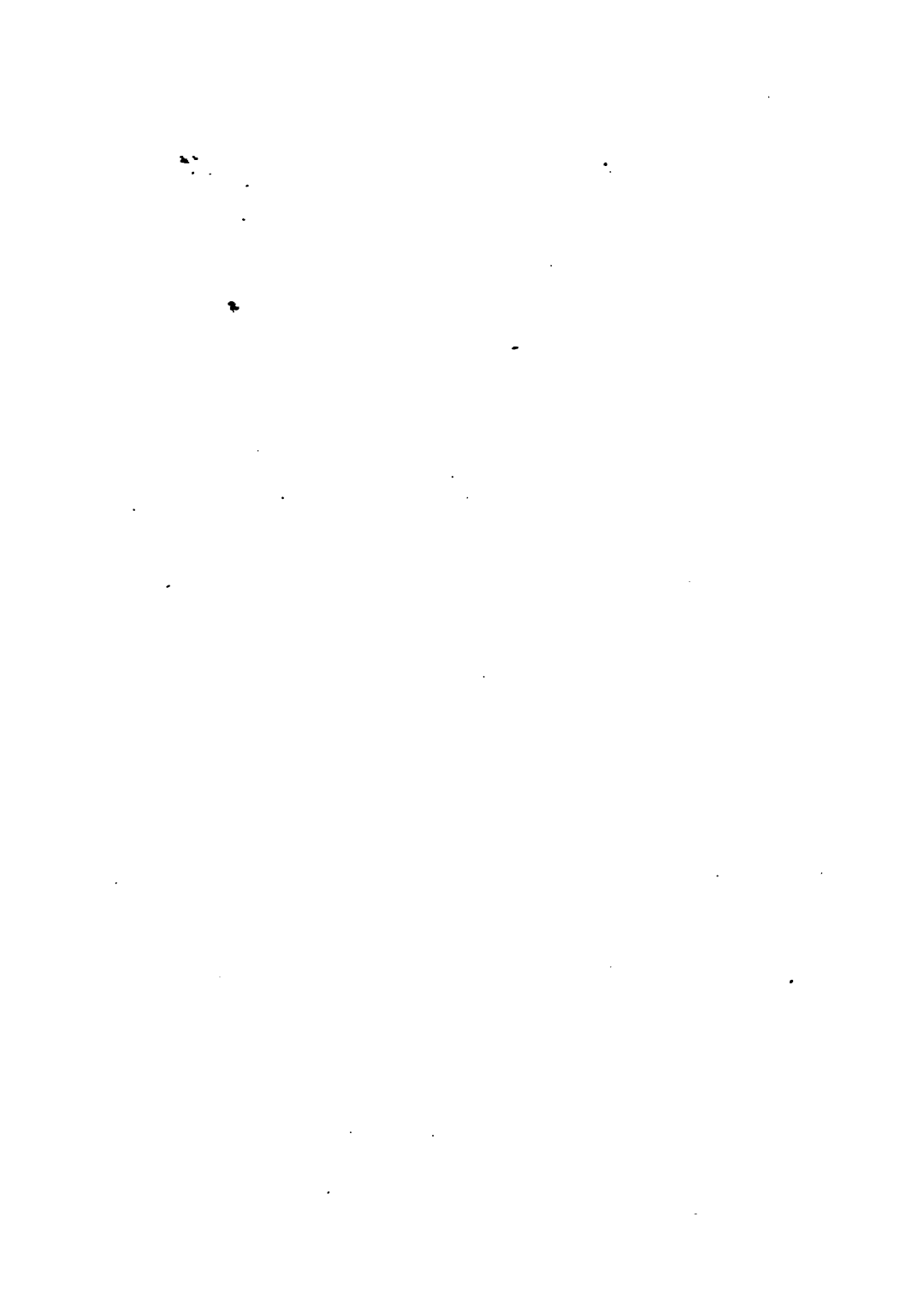
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STUDIES IN MODERN PROBLEMS.

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BY VARIOUS WRITERS.

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STUDIES IN MODERN PROBLEMS.



Studies in Modern Problems.

SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION.

THE question of Confession and Absolution in the Church of England, always among the number of *questions brulantes*, some months ago acquired additional warmth. We had a debate in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, followed by a report from a committee of the whole house. Many of the bishops expressed their opinions, and a few letters and articles appeared in the newspapers. Moreover there were sundry anti-confessional meetings, remarkable chiefly for the hard things which were said of the bishops, who have been unable to satisfy, in the way of condemnation and repression, the demands of their Protestant friends.

But the silly season is at an end ; and we may hope that the time has arrived when those, who are interested in the question, will be content to consider it calmly. There can be no doubt that the practice of Confession to a Priest widely prevails in the Church of England, and in the debate in Convocation every bishop admitted it. Their lordships probably are not aware how widely spread the practice is, for unfortunately in some dioceses the bishop has very imperfect information as to what is going on. It is of course impossible to arrive at anything like a precise estimate of the numbers who go to confession. But some facts are at hand. In a recent number, the "Literary Churchman" mentioned that one priest in London had last year heard 1,300 confessions : and there is no reason to suppose his case an exceptional one, amongst either the London clergy, or their brethren whose

work lies in large towns. Several well-known priests have been disabled by the strain which this work put upon them. And it would probably be found that not only an appreciable but a large percentage of the communicants of the Church of England now confess their sins to a priest.¹ But whatever the precise numbers may be, mere numbers are the least significant part of the case. You cannot revive confession without the laity, or give absolution unless people humbly and heartily desire it. If any proof were needed that the Catholic Revival is essentially a lay movement it would be found in the revived practice of confession.

And with what effect? On all hands we hear of revived spiritual life. There are more, and more devout, communions, sisterhoods, guilds, increase of prayers, increase of works of charity. Do these things simply coincide in point of time with the revival of confession, or do they spring out of that practice? In any case the coincidence is remarkable.

We propose in this paper to discuss briefly the theory of Sacramental Confession, as indicated by the nature of sin, repentance, and absolution. But first we must premise that the practice is in accordance with Anglican traditions.

Mr. Carter in his "Doctrine of Confession" has discussed very fully the teaching of the formularies, and the historical

¹ A writer in the "Guardian," immediately after the Convocation debate, spoke of the revived practice of confession as a "fashion;" existing at the moment; but destined, like any other fashion, to pass away. It might be sufficient to suggest to the writer in question that, while he is not inexperienced in changes, he has not given any proof that he possesses the gift of foresight. But, having ventured to say that no one would continue to go to confession who passed a sufficient time daily in the open air, a hunting-man writes to the paper to say that he spends his time as much in the open air as most country gentlemen, and yet goes regularly to confession. Moreover, he adds, that in a limited circle of acquaintance he knows other men who do the same. Of course there is a rejoinder; and equally, of course, the man, who must, at least once in his life, have made the most signal mistake any man can make, proceeds to predict, and to tell the country gentleman that if he continues to hunt, he will give up confession!

evidence of the use of Confession in the Church of England. On the latter point he quotes (p. 204), the Visitation Articles amongst others, of Archbishop Parker, 1567 ; Bishop Overall, 1619; Bishop Andrewes, 1625 ; Cosin (as Archdeacon of York), 1627 ; the Bishop of Peterborough, 1636 ; Wren, Bishop of Norwich, 1636 ; and Montague, Bishop of Ely, 1686. Archbishop Parker's enquiry was whether any taught "that mortal voluntary sins be not remissible by penance." The Visitation Articles of the other Bishops included the following enquiry : "If any man confess his secret and hidden sinnes, be he sick or whole, to the minister, for the unburthening of his conscience, and receiving such spiritual consolation, doth or hath the said minister at any time revealed or made known to any person whatsoever, any crime or offence so committed to his trust, contrary to the 113th Canon ?" This same 113th Canon of 1603, which, as Mr. Carter remarks, cannot have been framed to meet isolated cases ; but must have had reference to practices in ordinary use, is as follows : "Provided always that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburdening his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him, we do not in any way bind the said minister by this our constitution ; but do straitly charge and admonish him that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever, any crime or offence so committed to his trust or secrecy (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same) under pain of irregularity." Irregularity, it may be observed, is the greatest penalty, except degradation from the priesthood, to which a clergyman can be subject.

The evidence thus adduced as to the early part of the seventeenth century is brought down through the writings of Chillingworth,¹ Bishops Jeremy Taylor, Cosin, and Patrick, John

¹ Chillingworth died in 1644. He is quoted by Milner in "The End of Con-

Isham, the author of "The Whole Duty of Man," to the beginning of the eighteenth century. From that time it is admitted that "Confession not only fell into almost universal disuse, but came to be regarded as a practice detrimental to vital religion, and altogether alien to the system of the Church of England." "Yet," continues Mr. Carter, "it cannot be deemed any disparagement to a religious ordinance, if in seeking precedents for its use, we have to pass over the eighteenth century, and recur to days when George Herbert gave the tone to the pastoral ministry, when Taylor shed over the rules of holy living and holy dying the graces of his own beautiful and fervent piety, and Hooker, Sanderson, and Bull lent the weight of their profound learning to sustain the cause of the English Reformation. Nor is it in favour of those who now oppose the revived desire for Confession, that the only century since our LORD'S death, which in its prevailing practice at all justifies their conclusion, is the one out of the cold torpor of which we are slowly struggling, when the Non-jurors had been lost to the Church, when Convocation was silenced by the State because of the dissensions of the two Houses, when Wesley could find no place among us, and the largest secessions ever known in England occurred, when the Church cared so little for the growing multitudes still left to her, that the unprecedented passion for church building of the last thirty years, has failed to recover the lost ground; when with but rare exceptions the dank and disfigured churches were closed from Sunday to Sunday, and the state of our fonts and altars bore unmistakeable and most melancholy testimony to the dishonour fallen on the two most indispensable sacraments, the pre-eminent mysteries which communicate the full life of the Incarnation."

The fact then appears to be that when the spiritual life has troversy," Letter XLI., to prove that Confession and Absolution were doctrines of the Church of England.

been strong and vigorous, Confession has prevailed : when that life has waned and been ready to perish, Confession has been disused.

We have not attempted in this place to discuss the Anglican formularies, partly because we are not mainly concerned with the legal aspect of the question, and partly because the discussion has been exhausted by Mr. J. C. Chambers and Mr. J. D. Chambers in "The Church and the World," and Mr. Carter in his "Doctrine of Confession." But it may be well to adduce on one point evidence which must be invalidated before the opponents of Confession in the Church of England can appeal to her formularies to obtain sanction for their views. A writer in the "Pall Mall Gazette" acutely observed that in the bishops' debate no prelate touched the question of Absolution ; and yet everything turns on that question. For if there are a set of men divinely appointed to convey to sinners the pardon of their sins, it is useless to debate whether sinners should resort to them or not. The fact of their existence answers that question.

Now it is just on this point of the absolving power that the Anglican formularies speak so clearly. There are the words in the service for the ordination of priests (not used be it remembered in the ordering of deacons),¹ and there is the absolution in the office for the Visitation of the Sick. Let us hear Dr. Newman : "I challenge in the sight of all England Evan-

¹ "As to the argument that the prayer for forgiveness follows the formula of Absolution, it is nothing more than a prayer that GOD would ratify in heaven what His priest has just done on earth. If only power to declare the conditions of forgiveness be meant, we ask again, why the distinction in the Ordinal between the conferring words of priest and deacon? Do not all deacons possess the declarative power? Equally with priests they are authorised to preach. The deacon is a minister, a prophet—a preacher of the whole truth of GOD. A priest is something more ; what more? What distinction can there be, if not an official power to *do* something, which is conferred upon the one and not upon the other?' British Quarterly Review (Nonconformist), Jan. 1868

gelical clergymen generally to put on paper an interpretation of this form of words consistent with their sentiments which shall be less forced than the interpretation which Tract XC. puts upon any passage in the Articles. 'Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who hath left *power* to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and by *His authority committed unto me, I absolve thee from all thy sins*, in the Name, &c.' I subjoin the Roman form, as used in England and elsewhere: 'DOMINUS noster JESUS CHRISTUS te absolvat; et ego auctoritate Ipsius te absolvo ab omni vinculo excommunicationis et interdicti in quantum possum et tu indiges. Deinde ego te absolvo à peccatis tuis, in Nomine, &c.' (History of my Religious Opinions, p. 87, note.)

When a clear answer has been given to Dr. Newman—and not until then—it will be possible to contend that the formularies of the Church of England do not in the fullest sense recognise the absolving power of the priesthood and all that is necessarily involved therein. We may note in passing that even the Apology for the Confession of Augsburg—a document drawn up by Melancthon, and received as authoritative by Lutherans—speaks strongly on the power of the keys: "The power of the keys administers and sets forth the gospel through absolution, which is the true voice of the gospel; . . . and because GOD truly through the word makes alive, the keys truly before GOD remit sins. Wherefore the voice of the absolver is to be believed not otherwise than a voice sounding from heaven (p. 167.) It would be impious to take private absolution out of the Church. Nor, if there be any that despise private absolution, do they understand what remission of sins is, or the power of the keys (p. 181.)"¹ It would seem

¹ "Apology for the Confession of Augsburg," 1531, quoted by Winer, "Confessions of Christendom," p. 305.

then, that a "true Gospel Minister," according to the Lutheran conception, is one who diligently exercises the ministry of absolution !

Before proceeding further it may be well to clear the ground by discussing certain terms which are constantly employed in the controversy. And first as to the word "sacramental" as applied to confession.

The use of the term has arisen from the necessity of the case, and bears witness to the prevalence of the revived practice. People will not consent to use a long sentence where one expression will serve their turn, and so "Sacramental Confession" has become the equivalent for "Confession made to a Priest with a view to Absolution." Possibly the term is open to some objections. Hooker has attacked it with great vigour ; but when we take his argument as a whole we find that he aims his shafts, not at confession to a priest, which he both recommended and practised, nor at the absolving power, but at a system which he sums up in the four following propositions : "1. That the only remedy for sin after baptism is sacramental penitency. 2. That confession in secret is an essential part thereof. 3. That GOD Himself cannot now forgive sins without the priest. 4. That because forgiveness at the hands of the priest must arise from confession in the offender, therefore to confess unto him is a matter of such necessity, as being not either in deed, or at the least in desire performed, excludeth utterly from all pardon, and must consequently in Scripture be commanded wheresoever any promise of forgiveness is made." Hooker calls this the doctrine of the Papacy (although his propositions are inconsistent with the teaching of the Council of Trent), and attacks it vigorously. In doing so he makes an onslaught on "Sacramental" Confession as part of this system. It is therefore of the utmost importance to bear in mind that the term has no necessary connection with a system which—if it ever

really existed—they who defend Sacramental Confession would be the first to repudiate.

The term is defensible, if it be allowed that penance is in any sense a sacrament ; or that absolution given to a penitent who makes confession, is an outward sign of an inward grace given to him. And it is difficult to see how either proposition can be denied, by those who have the Prayer-book in their hands. True, the Church of England declares that two sacraments only are *generally* necessary to salvation ; but she has never restricted the term "Sacrament" to those two ordinances. Holy Matrimony is a sacrament, and is so termed in the Homily ; but obviously it is not a sacrament in the same sense as either Baptism or the LORD'S Supper. "As to the instance of two sacraments only," says Bishop Taylor, in his "Dissuasive from Popery" (p. 240), "I desire the gentlemen to understand our doctrine a little better. It is none of the doctrine of the Church of England that there are two sacraments only ; but that of those rituals commanded in Scripture, which the ecclesiastical use calls sacraments (by a word of art) two only are generally necessary to salvation." Bishop Overall—in this matter the most important authority—both uses and explains the term Sacramental Confession : "The Church of England, howsoever it holdeth not Confession and Absolution Sacramental (that is, made unto and received from a priest) to be absolutely necessary, as that without it there can be no remission of sins ; yet by this place it is manifest what she teacheth concerning the virtue and force of this sacred action."¹

When it is remembered that Bishop Overall was the author of the last part of the Church Catechism, we may fairly claim the liberty to use a term which he employed. To the objection that confession is not spoken of as "sacramental" in

¹ A manuscript note on the Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick. Quoted by Dr. Pusey, in his "Letter to the Bishop of London," 1861, p. 10.

the Anglican formularies, it is sufficient to reply that no occasion arises for the use of the word. At the Visitation of the Sick it is ordered: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if," &c. The addition of the word "sacramental" would be mere surplusage. He is to be moved to make confession to a priest with a view to absolution; and this, following Bishop Overall, we call "Sacramental Confession."

We must next notice the term "habitual confession," which has been so much condemned. The Bishop (Atlay) of Hereford permitted himself in Convocation to compare habitual confession to dram drinking. He said, "I feel strongly that as a medicine, confession may be of very great use; but that as a dram it ought to be forbidden." Putting aside what is offensive in the illustration, we may accept his lordship's words as helpful, and likely to clear away some misconceptions. Confession is a medicine, as the bishop says, and the medicine of the sin-sick soul. We ask, then, is the use of medicine in the case of sickness "habitual," or is it "exceptional"? Clearly what is "exceptional" as regards the whole life becomes "habitual" in respect to certain periods and phases of that life. On the whole, a man is not habitually sick, and therefore his use of medicine is exceptional. It is exceptional in respect to his life, habitual in respect to his sickness. And the distinction is an obvious one. Now, to apply this to the soul, we must remember that the Church assumes her people to be ordinarily in a state of grace. She regards her children as "called to be saints," and she does not suppose mortal sin to be the rule of their lives, but the exception. Hence it is to be supposed that she will regard the remedies for sin as exceptional. But given the sin, given the fact that the baptised person has fallen from grace, where and how does she limit the application of the remedy? On the contrary, does not the Bishop of Hereford speak her mind when he

says (after S. Augustine, Sermon XX. "*confessionis medicina*"): I feel strongly that as a medicine, confession may be of very great use?" That is, wherever there is real sickness, real sin, the medicine, confession, may be of very great use. And this is the whole theory of "habitual" confession: the need recurs, therefore the remedy is sought more than once.

Some have argued, with a curious confusion of thought, that "habitual" must necessarily mean "compulsory" confession. With as much truth the weekly offertory, to which each person is at liberty to contribute or not as he pleases, might be described as a compulsory payment. Where a law exists, such as that of the Lateran Council, which says you must go to confession at least once a year, you have compulsory confession. But when no such law is enforced, a person may make five hundred confessions, and the last can be no more compulsory than the first. Acts do not cease to be voluntary, because they are repeated at intervals.

To be consistent, they who object to "habitual" confession ought to lay down the canon, that absolution can be given but once. But then they would place absolution on a level with holy baptism, and so end by unduly exalting what they now seem unduly to depreciate. This is the unfortunate position of those who wish to construct a purely Anglican theory of "exceptional" auricular confession. If the Church allows such confession at all, she must allow it whenever need arises. To admit this, and yet to say that the need can only arise once or twice in a lifetime is manifestly absurd. And so, if confession be allowed at all, it must be what is called habitual confession; or, as we should prefer to term it, frequent confession.

The subject of "direction" demands notice before we pass on: for probably more prejudice exists on this particular aspect of the confessional than on any other. Mr. Carter

surely does not over-rate the misunderstanding which is so common, when he protests that "the object of direction is not, as it is too commonly imagined, to over-rule the action of individual conscience, or to enslave the judgment. It is not the enforcement of rules calculated to supersede the mind's own energies, or substitute a priestly craft for the laws which regulate the soul's individual responsibility. Great misconstructions have clouded the whole subject of spiritual guidance in the popular mind." ("Spiritual Guidance." Preface by Rev. T. T. Carter.)

Most of the bishops in Convocation considered "direction" as the specially objectionable thing. The late Bishop (Wilberforce) of Winchester spoke of it as "the great abuse in which perpetual (*sic*) confession finds its development." And the Bishop of London probably had "direction" in his mind when he spoke strongly (but not more strongly than a Catholic would think right) against "any human soul throwing off the burden of personal responsibility."

The misconception on this subject is so complete that we despair of gaining credence for the commonest facts. And yet, it is a fact that direction has no necessary connection whatever with confession. One part of the fourfold character of the confessor relates to teaching and guiding. He has to give "ghostly counsel and advice;" but a penitent is no more bound to follow it than any patient who goes to a medical man is bound to follow his advice.¹ Penitents do not, as the bishops would seem to think, take a vow of obedience to their confessors; or contract a relation to them which implies

¹ S. Francis of Sales, writing to a Religious about her confessions, says; "If it happen that he gives you some counsel contrary to your rules, and manner of life, listen to him with humility and respect, and then you will do what your rules will permit, and nothing more." (Quoted by Gaume, "Manual of Confessors," p. 311. See also S. Thomas, Summa, 22æ CIV. 5. c.: "Ex duobus potest contingere quod subditus suo superiori (the case of confessor and penitent is included herein) non teneatur in omnibus obedire: uno modo propter preceptum

any such vow. And as to the extreme case supposed by the Bishop (Jackson) of London, the notion could enter into the head of no Catholic. "Personal responsibility" lies at the very root of the practice of confession. Because we must each stand in awful solitude at the judgment seat of CHRIST, and because we are bidden to anticipate that judgment while there is yet time, we kneel in the tribunal of penance, to confess the sins for which we feel personally responsible. But possibly the bishop may not have meant responsibility for past acts, but for future. Now, if so, the charge means either a great deal or nothing. It means nothing, if it simply implies that a man may not always be able to see his own way, and may ask, and act upon, advice. But it means a great deal if it implies that a confessor (or, for that matter, a director,) can oblige a man to do what he (the doer) knows to be sinful; can say in effect, "Do what I tell you, although you believe it to be wrong, and I will answer to GOD in your place." There is no Catholic theologian in existence who would hesitate to condemn such a proposition as immoral.

There is, of course, a system of spiritual guidance which is properly called "direction;" and which implies rules given, and rules obeyed. The director may also be the confessor; but he is never the director, in this sense, simply because he is the confessor, although the terms may be loosely interchanged. With this system of direction we are not concerned here. So long as obedience is the mistress, and self-will is destructive, of all virtues, it will be of the highest value in the formation of saintly characters. But a father, a mother, a husband, a novice-mistress, a wise friend, may be directors, and have been directors with the happiest results;

majoris potestatis ("Obedire oportet DEO magis quam hominibus.") Alio modo non tenetur inferior suo superiori obedire, si ei aliquid præcipiat in quo ei non subdatur . . . Et ideo in his quæ pertinent ad interiorem motum voluntatis, homo non tenetur homini obedire, sed solum DEO."

and supposing it possible to abolish confession, you would not thereby abolish direction.

The advice given by a confessor is an invaluable aid to a soul struggling in earnest against sin. And if the advice be sound, and be accepted by the penitent (for the right of remonstrance is undoubted), it binds the conscience. But it cannot take away one atom of responsibility in all that concerns the eternal distinction between right and wrong. And people are not tied to one confessor. If they get advice which they know to be bad, there are other confessors at hand to review, and, if need be, to correct that advice. The influence exerted at the present day by what pretends to be public opinion, and the pressure which is often employed to stifle religious convictions, are more real and more dangerous evils than any which proceed from direction; but we do not hear warnings against them from the bench of bishops. Recent events have shown only too clearly that, if direction has been discouraged, that "great principle of the Reformation," persecution, which is direction and something more, remains.

The grave issues involved in this subject will not ultimately be affected by misinterpretation or misuse of terms. In face of the stern necessities of the struggle with temptation and masterful sin, the earnest soul, once awakened to its privileges, will not consent to be robbed of any help which GOD has appointed. The question is, whether or not GOD has provided that Sacramental Confession shall be the ordinary remedy for sin after baptism, and this question we now proceed to discuss.

If all Christians were agreed as to the nature of sin our task would be much simplified; but it is probable that there is no one theological subject on which differences are wider or more serious. The most popular belief at the present day would seem to be that sin is less our fault than our misfortune. Hence the frequent reference to our corrupt and fallen nature in popular tracts and sermons; and the eagerness to insist upon

the fact (a perfectly true one in its place) that we are all "miserable sinners." There is great comfort in laying stress upon the *all*. We are bad, no doubt; but then all are bad also. This way of thinking results from the latent Calvinism, which filtering through the Thirty-nine Articles,¹ and Nonconformist traditions, so strongly tinctures our popular religious conceptions. According to Calvin the Fall resulted in the hopeless ruin of human nature. Man lost not only a supernatural gift, and received a wound in his natural faculties, but he became thereafter incapable of anything really good. He could never hope to be holy, only by a legal fiction, called imputation, to be accounted holy. Now no sense of sin, as a Catholic understands the word, is logically possible for a person who holds these opinions. His sin results from something altogether beyond his own control; how then can he acknowledge it to be his fault? The eloquent Brighton preacher, who so often touched the weak points of popular religion, has made his mark here. He is commenting on Psalm li.: "Personal accountability. 'My sin'—strange but true. It is hard to believe the sin we do our own. One lays the blame on circumstances: another on those who tempted: a third on Adam, Satan, or his own nature as if it were not himself. 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' In this psalm there is no such self-exculpation. Personal accountability is recognized throughout . . . Conscience, when it is healthy, ever speaks thus: '*my* transgression.' It was not the guilt of them that tempted you:

¹ The Article IX. on Original Sin is by no means Calvinistic, as may be seen by comparing the cautious language of the Article with the following, from the "Larger Catechism." "The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions."

they have theirs : but each, as a separate agent, his own degree of guilt. Yours is your own : the violation of your own and not another's sense of duty ; solitary, awful, unshared, adhering to you alone of all the spirits of the universe. Perilous to refer the evil in us to any source out of and beyond ourselves. In this way penitence becomes impossible, fictitious." (Robertson's "Sermons," 2nd series, p. 97.)

Everyone, who has been engaged in pastoral work, has encountered the state of mind against which these words are directed. And not only amongst the uneducated, but in that respectable portion of society which regards church-going on Sunday as a matter of the simplest propriety. Speak to them of their sins and they will acknowledge their sinfulness ; but with the proviso, expressed with more or less tact, that they are no worse than their neighbours. Hannah More brings this out very cleverly in a passage from "Cœlebs," which we must quote : "In the evening Mrs. Ranby was lamenting, in general and rather customary terms, her own exceeding sinfulness. Mr. Ranby said, 'You accuse yourself rather too heavily, my dear ; you have sins, to be sure.' 'And pray what sins have I, Mr. Ranby ?' said she, turning upon him with so much quickness that the poor man started. 'Nay,' said he meekly, 'I did not mean to offend you ; so far from it, that hearing you condemn yourself so grievously, I intended to comfort you, and to say that, except a few faults —' 'And pray what faults ?' interrupted she, continuing to speak, however, lest he should catch an interval to tell them. 'I defy you, Mr. Ranby, to produce one.' 'My dear,' replied he, 'as you charged yourself with all, I thought it would be letting you off cheaply by naming only two or three, such as —' Here, fearing matters would go too far, I interposed, and, softening things as much as I could for the lady, said, 'I conceived that Mrs. Ranby meant, that though she partook of the general corruption —' Here Ranby, interrupting me with

more spirit than I thought he possessed, said, 'General corruption, sir, must be the source of particular corruption. I did not mean that my wife was worse than other women.' 'Worse, Mr. Ranby, worse?' cried she. Ranby, for the first time in his life, not minding her, went on, 'As she is always insisting that the whole species is corrupt, she cannot help allowing that she herself has not quite escaped the infection. Now to be a sinner in the gross, and a saint in detail, that is, to have all sins, and no faults, is a thing I do not quite comprehend.' " (*Cœlebs in Search of a Wife*," Hannah More, p. 402.)

It is probable that the alterations introduced into the Confessions at Morning and Evening Prayer, when those offices superseded Prime and Compline, and the different method of using them, may have contributed in some measure to that substitution of the general sense of sinfulness, for the personal sense of sin, which is now so common. Archdeacon Freeman points out the resemblance between the two forms, but as to their great and essential difference he is less explicit. The fact is that the form of Confession which precedes Matins and Evensong in the Prayer Book is to all intents and purposes a new form, and placed there with a new intention. He admits the latter fact, and quotes Cardinal Bona to show that the old Confessions and Absolutions, said alternately by priest and people—the priest confessing to them, as they to him—referred to the sins of the day or night preceding, and specially it would seem to sins and imperfections connected with the recitation of the Divine Office. ("Principles of Divine Service," I. 104.) The alteration to a general confession, couched in the language of strong feeling, and made no longer in the singular number, was very considerable. And the influence of the Prayer Book, especially in these its most familiar portions, has been so vast; that beyond all doubt conceptions of sin have been seriously affected by these forms.

The Archdeacon himself may be cited as an example. No one disputes his learning and powers : but possibly if he were less an admirer of formularies, which have certainly not been perfectly successful in keeping English people in the Church, we should not find him stating in the "*Guardian*" (July 2, 1873) the following objection to private confession : "As re-introduced now, it lays down impossible conditions for salvation : for no man can by possibility convey to any other a true account of the condition of his soul ; and yet any failure so to do is held to be deadly." To which it is sufficient to reply that self-examination, of which it is presumed the Archdeacon approves, must be equally impossible, if we suppose S. Paul, when he said, "Let a man examine himself," to have been addressing people devoid of common sense. The precept holds good, although man's self-knowledge must be limited, and although his memory is imperfect and treacherous. And what a man can discover in self-examination that he can, within such limits as his faculties impose, confess. Besides a penitent has not to give an account of the "condition of his soul," but to confess his sins. And if the Archdeacon will recall the Sarum form of Absolution he will find his difficulty solved.¹ But how is it possible that a learned and able man should write such words as those we have quoted ? From confounding sin and sinfulness. Sins are so many distinct acts, or thoughts, or words, or omissions. Sinfulness is the state which produces them, or results from them. And true penitence depends upon the sense, not of

¹ The Sarum form is as follows : "Our LORD JESUS CHRIST of His great goodness absolve thee ; and I by the authority of the same GOD and LORD JESUS CHRIST, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul committed to me, absolve thee from all those sins which being contrite in heart with thy mouth thou hast confessed to me ; and from all other thy sins which if they had occurred to thy remembrance thou wouldest have been ready to confess ; [and I restore thee to the Sacraments of the Church.] In the Name," &c. ("*Enchiridion, or Hours according to the Sarum Use.*" Lumley, 1860.)

sinfulness, but of sin. There is all the difference possible between a man's lamenting the condition of his soul, and lamenting his sins. The one indeed is useless unless it leads to the other.

If then it be granted that the sense of personal accountability is the first step to a true conviction of sin, and so to true repentance, the next question is, for what is a man accountable? Has he to answer for each separate sin, or only for the one or more sins which weigh most heavily upon his awakened conscience? Well, all known sins are matter for confession; but Catholic theology here makes a broad and most important distinction. All actual sins are held to be either mortal or venial; and mortal sins alone require a sacramental remedy. The distinction between these two classes of sin is no invention of the schools, but is imbedded in the pages of S. Paul and S. John. It is moreover a corollary of the doctrines of the Incarnation and of Holy Baptism; and it is in accordance with common sense. In one place S. Paul speaks of "quenching the SPIRIT," and in another of "grieving the HOLY SPIRIT" (1 Thess. v. 19 and Ephes. iv. 30), and the distinction between these two terms is broad and obvious. One points to a cessation of the light and life of the indwelling SPIRIT; the other, under the touching form of a personal wrong, tells of the diminution of His blessed influence. So S. John, writing to those who have received an "unction from the Holy One," (1 John ii. 20) yet declares that "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves," implying that certain sins may co-exist with a state of grace. In the Old Testament the statement that "a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again," would seem to point to the same conclusion: which is confirmed by the fact that the distinction was known to the Rabbins.

But reason itself indicates that some sins are mortal and some venial. Of the faults which may be committed against a king

or a father, some deserve severe reprehension and forfeiture of rights, others simply deprive the offender of favour or mar his service. The distinction which the law of England makes between misdemeanour and felony may serve as an illustration. It is true that many offences which are misdemeanours are very grave, and more so than some which are accounted felonies; but the two categories are recognised as distinct. Felonies are those offences to which capital punishment is due: all other crimes are misdemeanours.

The distinction is moreover recognised in the sixteenth Article, "Of sin after baptism." "Not every deadly sin (*peccatum mortale*) willingly committed after baptism is sin against the HOLY GHOST and unpardonable." "The expression 'deadly sin,' " says Bishop Forbes, ("Explanation of the Articles," i. 237) "implies the distinction between deadly and venial sin, with all the consequences of that distinction." The classification of deadly sins may be more or less arbitrary, and differences of opinion are plainly allowable on the subject. What is beyond doubt is, that some sins destroy habitual grace, and need for their remedy a fresh infusion of that grace, and that these sins are properly called deadly. "Venial sins that separate not from the grace of GOD," says Bishop Cosin, "need not so much to trouble a man's conscience. If he have committed any mortal sin, then we require confession of it to a priest."

It still remains to enquire whether there be anything in the nature of sin, as revealed to us by Holy Scripture and experience, which would indicate the kind of remedy to be expected. We shall best prosecute this enquiry by studying the sin of man in its beginnings—in that ample record which the first chapters of Genesis contain, of the Fall of man.

That sin is a matter of detail we have already urged; but it has also its principles, and it can only be adequately apprehended by studying those principles.

Now in the history of the Fall we find the germ of all subsequent sins ; and at the same time, with considerable distinctness, an indication of the main forms of reparation. What then are we told about the sin ? The tempter approaching the woman said to her, "Yea, hath GOD said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden : but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, GOD hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die : for GOD doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The temptation is addressed to pride. Your curiosity shall be satisfied, you shall be raised out of your proper sphere, your intellect shall have a wider field. The attack is skilful because concentrated, and the point of attack is that in which the creature is most vulnerable—the desire to rise from the position assigned by GOD. But there is another part of the temptation, which immediately follows, namely, the gratification of the senses. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat." The gratification of the physical appetites and of the heart's pride was attained : and these two elements made up the sin. They have been the elements of all other sins that have been committed since that moment.

A priori reasoning would lead us to the same conclusion. Man is placed "lower than the angels, crowned with glory and worship." He occupies the lowest place amongst created intelligences, and the highest amongst material beings. And since this place is the expression of GOD's will concerning him, any attempt to pass from it, either upwards or downwards, must be properly sin. But as a fact man is constantly

making this effort. He either exalts himself unduly, and this is pride; or he falls towards the level of the brute, as he allows his lower appetites to master him, and this is sensuality.

Returning to our study of the Fall, we find in GOD'S dealing with our first parents, an indication of the reparation which He demands as corresponding to these elemental forms of sin. And we may notice that from the first man was to concur, and take his share, in the work of recovery. The Redeemer was first promised: without Him no efforts on man's part could have availed in the slightest degree: and the promise was very clearly made. But also it pleased GOD in His dealing with our first parents to reveal that the sinner would have his part in co-operating with the restoration. And when CHRIST had come Himself to take the sinner's place, we find a marvellous correspondence between Eden and Gethsemane, Paradise and Calvary, showing that under changed conditions, principles remained unaltered.

We read that GOD said to Adam after his sin: "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" To the woman the LORD GOD said, "What is this that thou hast done?" And Adam replied: "The woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and *I did eat*." And Eve replied: "The serpent beguiled me, and *I did eat*." Thus we see that GOD required from each, first from one and then from the other, the avowal of their fault, and the avowal was made. It was the first confession, made by the first sinners, and is an example to all their posterity. The avowal of his fault was also demanded of Cain after the murder of Abel. "Where is Abel thy brother?" But Cain refused. "I know not," he said: "Am I my brother's keeper?" By this refusal he put far away the grace, which Adam and Eve by their confessions showed themselves in the right disposition to receive.

After their confession GOD imposed a punishment on each, and a punishment common to both. "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." The special penance given to the man was of a different order. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Death was the common penalty of both, although it was announced only to Adam, as the head of the woman, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh.

Thus we see that from the beginning GOD appointed two remedies for sin, open confession of the fault, and suffering. These two remedies form the substance of all penitential discipline. They are set over against the two principles of evil. The humble avowal is the antidote to pride, for the essence of pride is the refusal to acknowledge that it exists; and once acknowledged it is ready to vanish away. Suffering, voluntarily accepted is the remedy for sensuality; and as the two forms of evil are united the special remedy for one also tends to cure the other.¹

The sacramental character of these remedies depends entirely upon the institution of CHRIST, and is a result of the

¹ It is doubtful whether pride and sensuality are ever separated. The person who allows himself to be the slave of his physical appetites, is not obeying, as he sometimes fondly imagines, a law of his nature, but is following the instinct of personal enjoyment. He makes himself the centre of the world of sense; and this is the essence of pride, which is simply defined as "the creature taking the place of the Creator." All undue self-indulgence has about it the element of pride. That pride is incompatible with purity might also be shown, if experience did not sufficiently attest it. Henry VIII. and Danton are two monstrous specimens of the common union of pride and impurity. On this subject the reader may refer to the work of Monseigneur Gerbet, "Views on the Dogma of Penitence," which has suggested the line of thought here followed.

way in which the Incarnation was wrought out. The penalty inflicted on the first Adam was of his own free will accepted by the Second. In the passion of our LORD and SAVIOUR, there is not only the expiatory, but also the penitential element. Regard Him in the garden of Gethsemane, bowed to the earth, His whole frame convulsed with agony, and ask what is the meaning of that terrible suffering? The only adequate answer is that which sees Him there bearing the burden of the sins of the whole world in penitence; as subsequently for expiation, He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. "It would be untrue," says Mr. Carter, in his Lectures on "The Passion and Temptation of our LORD" (p. 47), "unreal to say that the sense of sin could be in Thee as the sinner's sense of his own sin. Sin could not thus touch Thee; Thou couldest not ever know the consciousness of our corruption as Thine own. Its fearful penalty was Thine; but the sense of sin was ours only. Like to us in all things Thou wast made, but unlike in this; and yet in a true sense the consciousness, as well as the penalty, of sin was the cause of Thy fearful Agony. For the SPIRIT revealed the secret of those unknown, unimagined sufferings, when He taught us that Thou 'wast made sin' (2 Cor. v. 21.) The Innocent One in the garden of Gethsemane was making mystically the confession of humanity."

And without resorting to forced or fanciful interpretations it is impossible not to see how the Second Adam bore in His own Person the other part of the penance of the first Adam. In labour and pain the Church was born from His opened side. In the sweat of His brow, crowned with thorns, He eat that bread, which sustained His pure soul through all the years of His mortal life—the salvation of the souls which He came to seek.

To some, no doubt, these inner harmonies of redeeming love may seem merely fortuitous; but it will be found impos-

sible to deny that they exist, or that the Catholic conception of sin and its remedies does any violence to them. It is easy to ridicule the idea of finding the Confessional in the garden of Eden. The point would be a telling one on the platform of Exeter Hall ; for appeals are not ordinarily addressed from that place to any higher motives than unreasoning prejudice. But the fact remains that in the cradle of our race, as we find sin in its two main elements of pride and sensuality, so we find the two main elements of the Catholic penitential system, the humble avowal of the sin committed, and the remedial penalty of temporal suffering.

It is admitted on all hands that repentance is a necessary condition of the forgiveness of actual sin. We proceed therefore to discuss briefly the nature of repentance, as it is understood by the Catholic Church from the beginning, and therein by the Church of England. "The root and beginning of penitency," says Hooker, "is the consideration of our own sin as a cause which hath procured the wrath, and a subject which doth need the mercy of GOD. . . . Wherefore the well-spring of repentance is faith, first breeding fear and then love ; which love causeth hope, hope resolution of attempt : I will go to my Father and say, I have sinned against heaven and against thee, that is to say, I will do what the duty of a convert requireth. Now, in a penitent's or convert's duty there are included, first, the aversion of the will from sin ; secondly, the submission of ourselves to GOD by supplication and prayer ; thirdly, the purpose of a new life testified with present works of amendment : which three things do very well seem to be comprised in one definition by them which handle repentance, as a virtue that hateth, bewaileth, and sheweth a purpose to amend sin. We offend GOD in thought, word, and deed. To the first of which three they make contrition ; to the second, confession ; to the last, our works of satisfaction answerable." ("Ecclesiastical Polity," VI., iii., 5.)

The Council of Trent lays down "that unto the entire and perfect remission of sins, three acts in the penitent, which are as it were the matter of the Sacrament of Penance, are required, to wit, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which are called the three parts of penance." (Session XIV., can. 4.) In the Communion Service the three parts of Repentance are brought together. "Let us return unto the LORD our GOD with all *contrition* and meekness of heart: bewailing and lamenting our sinful life, acknowledging and *confessing* our offences, and seeking to bring forth worthy fruits of *penance*."

We may take it then as a matter on which there is substantial agreement that contrition, confession, and satisfaction together make up repentance. Now a common accusation against Catholics is that the system of Sacramental Confession tends to make light of sin. "You have only to confess your sin, and get absolved, and then you can go and sin again." Not to mention that, where a man is his own confessor, the same sort of taunt is equally applicable, we may say that such a remark implies entire ignorance of the meaning of the very first element of repentance—contrition. For whatever else it contains, contrition necessarily implies the purpose of amendment. Without that purpose there could be no contrition at all. Nor is it a mere temporary, passing regret which can pass muster as contrition. True, as Hooker says, it is not a matter of sudden pangs and convulsions of the mind; and "it is no natural passion or anguish, which riseth in us against our wills; but a deliberate aversion of the will of man from sin." And it must be able to stand four tests: it must come from the heart; it must proceed from the conviction that sin is the greatest of all evils; it must extend to the whole range of sins (not consisting of regret for one and complaisance for another); and it must be prompted by motives which are not merely natural (as for example, the

shame of discovery, or injury to health, or loss inflicted on others.)¹ Contrition to be of any avail must satisfy all these conditions. If this fact were known and remembered, we should hear no more of confession indirectly "encouraging" sin.

And here the objection may probably be suggested that if such real contrition is required as a condition precedent, there can be no need of any farther process, for the penitent must be already reconciled with GOD. To which we reply that one part of this objection turns on the necessity of absolution (of which anon) and the other bears on the necessity of confession and satisfaction as parts of repentance. And to this we now proceed.

If sin were entirely an inward thing, remaining in the heart, and never proceeding out of the heart, it might be plausibly argued that it was adequately met by the heart's contrition. But sin is no such thing. Words and deeds are in themselves outward, and thoughts influence both words and deeds. If therefore the remedy is to correspond with the evil, the sorrow, felt within, must be manifested both in word and deed. It is needless to quote the numerous texts of Holy Scripture which compel the inference that confession of sin is as essential as contrition. We have seen an indication of this law in the

¹ "The qualities of the resolution not to offend GOD any more, are of the same nature as those of contrition. This resolution ought to be sincere, firm, universal, and effectual. A mere willingness, an uncertain wavering resolution is not a sufficient resolution for contrition. Sincerity is the consequence of interior sorrow. He who from the bottom of his soul is deeply troubled at having offended GOD, does not fail to make sincerely the resolution not to offend Him any more in future. Firm, so that one be ready to surmount the most violent temptations, rather than displease GOD. . . . Universal, if one ought to have sorrow for every kind of mortal sin, one ought also to say that one wills to avoid them all without exception. Effectual ; that is to say, that it ought to make one take all the suitable measures for avoiding mortal sin. These means are above all, the flight from occasions and the destruction of habits." (Migne's "Dictionary of Moral Theology," p. 776. Founded on the standard work of Bergier.)

history of our first parents' sin: and the only question which need be discussed here is what sort of confession is the best under ordinary circumstances.

This question is sometimes treated as if the choice lay between confession to GOD, and confession to man; and so mis-stated the solution is not a difficult one. If indeed he who confesses to a priest, does not realise that he is confessing to GOD, and laying down His sins at the foot of the Cross, he is not in any sense making such a confession as the Church recognises. The words commonly used in making private confession prevent any possible mistake on this point. For whatever shape the words may subsequently take¹ they always begin with an address to GOD: "I confess to GOD Almighty," &c., or "I confess to Almighty GOD, His Only begotten SON JESUS CHRIST, and to GOD the HOLY GHOST," &c.

The confession then is always addressed to GOD; but is there no advantage in addressing it also to GOD'S ambassador and representative—the Priest? We put aside the fact that the priest represents also the Church, or whole body of the faithful, and that sin is a wrong done to them as well as to their King: and we ask whether the judgment of the soul be so easy a matter that we can dispense with help which we consider necessary when our body is sick or our property in danger? Bearing in mind that a confession is good or bad according to the contrition which it excites, and the humiliation which accompanies it, there is little room for doubt which sort of confession best ensures these essentials. We are so constituted that the formal statement made to another presents the facts with a new distinctness to ourselves. It is as we confess our sins to one, who knew them not before our avowal, that we most fully realise what those sins are. As to the

¹ See books of devotion in ordinary use, such as the "Churchman's Guide to Faith and Piety," "Treasury of Devotion," or "English Catholic's Vade Mecum."

humiliation involved in confession to a man let me cite some words of Bourdaloue : (" Sermon on Confession," v. 5, p. 348). " In the opinion of the Fathers what is penitence? Tertullian gives us an excellent idea of it, namely, that penitence is as it were an art or science which GOD uses to humble man, and by which man has learnt from GOD to humble himself; *Disciplina humiliificandi hominis*. Now of all the lessons contained within that divine science, there is not one which is comparable to that of confessing sin: why? because it is certain that nothing so humiliates man as the confession of sin. I do not say that vague and indefinite confession by which we protest in general that we are sinners, without specifying how and in what we are such. I do not say that mental and altogether interior confession which is made to GOD in the depth of the soul, and which only consists in recognising before Him what He already knows, and what we cannot, if we would, disguise from Him. For so far from this requiring either a deep feeling or great effort of humility, it does us honour, and is a mark of piety. But I do say that confession instituted by JESUS CHRIST . . . in which we do not content ourselves with saying ' I have sinned,' but where we bear witness against ourselves of this and that sin; where we say, 'This is what I have thought, this is what I have done, this is the passion which has carried me away, it is in this and that particular that I have betrayed the cause of my GOD.' In short that confession in which we do, in the tribunal of Penance, that which GOD will do at the Last Judgment, when He shall lay open all the consciences of men, and with a ray of His light shall search and penetrate all the folds of the soul. . . . What is all this but an heroic exercise of that humbling discipline of which Tertullian speaks? *Disciplina humiliificandi hominis*."

But do people usually take pains to make any distinct confession of all their sins when no other ear than that of

GOD is to hear it? Let it be granted that this may be done in some cases. Are they not exceptions?

"We either carry towards ourselves," says Hooker, "for the most part an over soft and gentle hand, fearful of touching too near the quick; or else, endeavouring not to be partial, we fall into timorous scrupulosities, and sometimes into those extreme discomforts of mind from which we hardly do ever lift up our heads again." And he says it is for this reason that "men thought it the safest way to disclose their secret faults and to crave imposition of penance from those whom our LORD JESUS CHRIST hath left in His Church to be spiritual and ghostly physicians," &c. We quote the passage, not as claiming Hooker's authority, but for its common sense. A keenly sensitive conscience will be too severe; a sluggish conscience will be too careless and inexact in confession; and where in the one case the priest would encourage, and in the other would prompt and admonish, without his assistance the confession must probably be made with bad effect. No doubt it would be nearer the truth to say that systematic confession of sins is never made at all by the very large class whose consciences are not in a high degree sensitive. But, assuming that essential part of true repentance not to be neglected, we contend that a penitent, who acts as his own confessor, runs great risks of making a bad confession. "As a matter of prudence," says Jeremy Taylor, "it is not safe to trust a man's self in the final condition and last security of his soul, a man being no good judge in his own case." And he sums up his exhortations to confession, (which, although addressed to a sick person, would seem at least as applicable to a sinner in health, unless the latter have some security for a lease of life,) by saying: "That when a duty is so useful in all cases, so necessary in some, and encouraged by Gospel promises, by Scripture precedents, by the example of both

Testaments, and prescribed by the injunctions of the Apostles, and by the rule of all churches, and the example of all ages, and taught us even by the proportions of duty, and the analogy of the power ministerial, and the very necessities of every man; he that for stubbornness, or sinful shame-faceness, or prejudice, or any other criminal weakness, shall decline to do it in the days of his danger when the vanities of the world are worn off, and all affections to sin are wearied, and the sin itself is pungent and grievous, and that we are certain we shall not escape shame for them hereafter, unless we be ashamed of them here, and use all the proper instruments of their pardon: such a man as this is very near death; but very far off from the kingdom of heaven.”¹

Let this suffice concerning the second part of repentance. The third part, or satisfaction, remains to be noticed, “the worthy fruits of penance.”

If the religion of CHRIST were purely spiritual, taking no account of outward acts, and dealing only with the inmost will, then no doubt it would be unnecessary that the penitent should add to the conversion of the heart any outward acts of penitence either in word or deed. But this is not so. And the method of the Atonement, no less than the fact of the Incarnation, prove that it is not so. Our LORD did not work out man’s salvation by a purely internal act of desire, or love, or devotion: but to His will to redeem mankind was added the voluntary acceptance of suffering in soul and body. If it be asked whether suffering has a part in the restoration of the sinner, the Passion is a complete answer. Christians are pledged to follow in their Master’s steps. As He dealt with

¹ Taylor’s “Holy Dying,” v. iii. That Bishop Taylor had no idea of deferring confession to a death-bed is evident from many expressions. Thus, he says: “It is usually advised by spiritual persons, that the sick man make an universal confession, or a renovation and repetition of all the particular confessions and accusations of his whole life.”

sin, so must they deal with it ; such limitations being, of course, understood as flow from His Divine nature, and infinite holiness.

Upon this point Protestant divines raise a difficulty which demands careful and sympathetic study. They are jealous for the completeness and perfection of our LORD'S work of expiation. Has He not made a full, perfect, and complete satisfaction for sins ? What, then, remains for the sinner to do ? The fact of complete satisfaction is undoubted, and Catholic theologians admit it with one consent. There is a series of texts which assert the completeness of our LORD'S satisfaction. But then there is also another series of texts which urge upon the repentant sinner the duty of works of penance, specially prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. How are we to understand these ?

When the question is studied, it appears that the difficulty is of the same nature as that which meets us as to GOD'S almightiness and man's free will. It is a difficulty which enters even into the tenet of creation. If GOD be infinite, and the finite be included in the infinite, how can anything exist which is not GOD ? Pantheism solves this difficulty in one way : atheism in another. Now the difficulty about our LORD'S infinite satisfaction, and our share in that satisfaction, through works of penance, is of the same kind. If you swallow up all the penitential acts of Christians, in the infinite penance of the Passion, so as to deny that the former have any real existence, you do precisely what the Pantheists do as to creation. On the other hand, if you hold that works of penance have any value apart from the Cross, you are on the same line of reasoning as those who account for the existence of man by dethroning GOD. Catholic belief makes no sacrifice of either side of the truth ; but exhibits them in perfect harmony. As Man, our LORD JESUS CHRIST suffered and atoned for our sins ; as GOD, He gave to that atonement an

infinite value. And by every penance which the sinner performs, he appropriates and carries on (always through the merits of CHRIST) the work of reparation for sin. If this were not so, S. Paul's words, in which he speaks of "filling up that which is deficient of the afflictions of CHRIST in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church," would seem to approach blasphemy. Whereas it is plain that the Apostle in no way asserts the incompleteness of the sufferings of CHRIST, but what is wanting of them in *him—in his flesh*—and this he rejoices to fill up. Works of penance, then, duly performed with a pure intention, unite the penitent to the sufferings of CHRIST; draw him within the life-giving sphere of the Passion; and complete his repentance. They may be voluntarily undertaken; or they may be accepted at the hands of GOD'S minister; but they cannot with impunity be omitted.

We submit, then, to those who are opposed to the revived use of the Sacrament of Penance amongst us, whether, alike from the nature of sin, and from the nature of repentance, there is not a strong presumption that the work of revival is in accordance with the will of GOD, and due to His HOLY SPIRIT. But, as we have said, the question must ultimately be decided by the test of the absolving power. If GOD has set apart an order of men endued with power to absolve all sinners who truly repent, then nothing can be more absolutely certain than that sinners burdened with a sense of their sins will resort to that ministry. "Confession means either a great deal or nothing, and therefore is a safe phrase for people who do not want to say all they mean. *Absolution has a definite meaning, and a deeply momentous one.*" We emphasise the words (from the "Pall Mall Gazette") which show what, in the eyes of the world, is the vital point of the controversy.

It will not be necessary in this place to establish more than one proposition—namely, that the Church of England holds

and teaches the doctrine of absolution now in precisely the same sense as she held and taught it in the reign of Henry VII., that is to say, before what is called the Reformation. Article XXXIII. deals with the external side of absolution in its bearing on Church discipline, declaring that an excommunicate person can only be restored "by a judge that hath authority thereunto;" while the Canons give effect to this by reserving certain cases to the Archbishop. It is evident that however godly discipline may, for various reasons, have fallen into abeyance, the Church of England asserts and reserves her rights. As to the authority of her priests in the *forum internum*, there are the words used in the Ordination of Priests: "Receive the HOLY GHOST for the office and work of a priest in the Church of GOD, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of GOD, and of His holy Sacraments; in the Name," &c.

Two suggestions have been offered in order to evacuate these words of their plain meaning.

First, that the power conferred refers only to church censures. To which it is sufficient to reply (1) that the Article referred to above deals with church censures, and lays down the method of remitting them "*arbitrio Judicis competentis*," and not, as this interpretation of the words of ordination would require, by every person who has received priest's orders; and (2) that the meaning of the words is clearly determined by the forms of absolution, which the Church puts into the mouths of her ministers. It borders upon the ludicrous to suppose that every morning and evening the parish priest is instructed to tell his parishioners that GOD, Who desires not the death of a sinner, hath given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people—what?—the remission of their Church censures! But

there is nothing ludicrous, there is something terribly painful in supposing that after a penitent on his death-bed has been moved to make a special confession of his sins, the priest is only bidden to say, "I absolve thee from thy Church censures." The collation of the words used in ordaining priests, with the absolution in the office for the Visitation of the Sick, suffices to determine the meaning of the former.

The other suggestion for explaining away the words of the ordination formula, would substitute for the remission of sins —preaching the gospel. There is considerable ingenuity in this suggestion. The *Apology for the Confession of Augsburg*, quoted above, considers the ministry of absolution the truest way of preaching the gospel, and we cannot deny that there is a certain cleverness in reading this Protestant formula backwards. But there are two fatal objections to the suggested gloss. If when the Church says, "Whose sins thou dost forgive, &c.," she means only to give a commission to preach the gospel, why does she not use the words in ordering deacons? The deacon may preach, but absolution is reserved to the priest alone. How then can one be equivalent to the other? Moreover, there is the power of withholding absolution as well as giving it: "Whose sins ye retain, &c.;" and this is another fatal difficulty to the theory.

We do not stop to cite Anglican authorities as to the doctrine of absolution. They are to be found in abundance in such an elementary work as Bishop (Wordsworth) of Lincoln's "*Theophilus Anglicanus*." We take only one citation, from Bishop Sparrow: "If our confession be serious and hearty, this absolution is effectual, as if GOD did pronounce it from heaven: so says the Confession of Saxony, and Bohemia, and the Augsburg Confession (xi., xii., xiii.) and so says S. Chrysostom, in his fifth Homily on Esay, 'Heaven waits and expects the priest's sentence here on earth; and

what the servant rightly binds or looses on earth, that the LORD confirms in heaven.' S. Augustine and S. Cyprian, and general antiquity say the same" (p. 132).

We have been concerned in this place only with the teaching of the Church of England. That her teaching on absolution is too clear to be mistaken or explained away, and that her teaching is Catholic and Primitive, and therefore in accordance with Holy Scripture, is our position. She sends her priests out with a real commission, and with real power to heal souls afflicted with the leprosy of sin, by applying to them in absolution the precious Blood, which alone can cleanse the guilty soul. Even the power and efficacy of the Atoning Blood itself is limited by the dispositions of the soul to which it has to be applied; and the commission of the priest is strictly to *penitent* sinners. But wherever the true penitent is found, there too is ready the word of power to loose the bands of his sins. We say that this is the unmistakable teaching of the Church of England. And, if so, it must follow that those who exercise this ministry, so far from being unfaithful stewards, deserve to be upheld and encouraged by those in authority. No doubt the doctrine of absolution is not adapted to public opinion, or calculated to meet with popular favour. Now, as of old, when mortal lips speak of forgiving sins, the cry is ready, "This man blasphemeth."¹ But if bishops do not use the words of ordination in a non-natural sense, they ought to defend their clergy when thus assailed. Their lordships are in a difficult position. If they adhere to the Prayer Book,

¹ It is noticeable that when the Jews accused our Blessed LORD of blasphemy, for saying "Thy sins be forgiven thee," that two answers were possible. Our LORD might have said, "I am GOD, I forgive in exercise of My Divine power." This was one alternative, and our LORD did not take it. On the other hand, He might meet the charge by asserting that the power was committed to men. And this He took. "The SON of MAN hath power on earth to forgive sins." And so the people understood Him, for we are told that "they marvelled and glorified GOD which had given such power unto men." (S. Matth. ix. 8.)

they offend my Lord Shaftesbury and the *Times* newspaper. If they use the Prayer Book, with mental reserve, and in a non-natural sense, they injure the Church, the clergy, and their own souls : and in the long run they ensure for their successors dis-establishment and dis-endowment. It would seem, however, as if policy and duty pointed in the same direction, namely, to sustain those who are faithful to the whole spirit of the Prayer Book as well as to its letter. Unpopularity is inevitable in any case ; but it need not be accompanied by the reproaches of a conscience which tells of a great trust abandoned ; and of words which, if not real, are simply blasphemous, habitually used in the exercise of the most solemn function committed to a bishop. We venture in this connection to recall certain words of the late Bishop Wilberforce, in his first Ordination Sermon as Bishop of Oxford. After quoting the words, "Receive ye the HOLY GHOST. Whose sins ye remit ; they are remitted," he added : "These same words are again to be spoken to-day as in His Name, and as if He were present with us. And all this is the most blasphemous frivolity, if it is not the deepest truth. But truth it is."

The practical effect of Sacramental Confession remains to be briefly noticed. The opponents of the practice lay great stress upon the supposed evils which confession entails ; and they endeavour to make out their case by appeals to works of moral theology, which are intended for the guidance of confessors. It has often been pointed out that by stringing together passages from the Bible itself—not to mention such books as are in the hands of medical men—a work might be produced, which, like the one which was hawked about under the title of the "Confessional Unmasked," would properly be suppressed under Lord Campbell's Act. Even Lord Shaftesbury (whose services to the poor, Catholics are amongst the foremost to acknowledge and respect), could not refrain at

Exeter Hall from making disgusting accusations. He was apparently as unable to grasp the intention of a technical treatise as he was to understand M. Michelet's attitude towards Catholicism in France. But the tone of the secular press sufficiently shows that Lord Shaftesbury's line of attack was not only an offence, but a blunder. Appeals to the most ignorant section of an ignorant class, and ribaldry about the "red one of Babylon," are not likely to promote any cause: and the time will surely come, if indeed it has not already come, when thoughtful and earnest people, who know something of the sores that are festering beneath our superficial civilization, will ask whether the confessional be not the best and indeed the only remedy.

Let us mention a few only of the benefits which Sacramental Confession bestows upon society and individuals.

1. The great difficulty which is found in pastoral work is admitted to be the getting at the souls of our people. Again and again we meet with the cry for more intercourse between pastor and people, on the part of those to whom the care of souls has been committed. Now this intercourse must be either formal or informal, with or without safeguards. Let us take the most favourable case; that in which a parishioner comes to seek the parish priest, for advice and spiritual help. Of course they must be alone together: and the priest must put such questions as are necessary to enable him rightly to understand what his visitor wishes to say. If the case be a painful one, there is nothing in place or circumstance to help the poor soul in its embarrassment. Now what possible evil is there which has been alleged against the confessional which may not arise in such a case as we have put? On the other hand, if the penitent came to the priest openly in the Church (but of course with such privacy as would prevent others from hearing what was said); if the recognised object of the interview was purely and entirely spiritual—the posi-

tion of priest and penitent defined clearly in the mind of each—is it not abundantly evident that the work is likely on either side to be better done? But this is the most favourable case. In practice there is great difficulty in getting people to come to the clergyman at all; and when they do come to keep them from wandering off into mere generalities, or even common chit-chat. It may be said no doubt that advice given in the confessional is invested with a solemnity which would be wanting in the other case: that thus there is the danger of tyranny, and of weakening responsibility. But we answer that tyranny is equally possible where the intercourse is informal: and moreover that it is vastly more probable. For the confessional is the tribunal not of justice, but of mercy: and a priest speaks with the deepest sense of responsibility when he knows that he is there, if possible, to set the sinner free. And then there is the seal of confession, which in a precise and formal manner binds the priest, under pain of committing sacrilege, to conceal for ever all that he has heard. We do not for a moment suppose that clergymen would ordinarily betray what was said to them in confidence; but cases will arise in which that general assurance will be insufficient. On the whole, we believe that risks are greater, and that benefits are less, when there is not the safeguard of a defined manner of receiving penitents.

But the great difficulty is to get at people at all: and to break through the reserve, which, though not without its good side, so chills and destroys all spiritual intercourse. "You will find," says Mr. Keble, "a good deal of my feelings in an article which has been reprinted from the 'Christian Remembrancer,' I mean especially when that speaks of the practical failure of the English Church, which I feel more and more deeply every day: chiefly in that I find myself more and more oppressed with the consciousness of my ignorance, and how blindly I go about my parish, not knowing what men are

really doing : and whenever I make any discoveries they disclose a fearful state of things ; and even when there is some seriousness, of respect and confidence towards the priest as such, there is none, or next to none. In short, our one great grievance is the neglect of confession. Until we can hope to revive that we shall not have the due severity in our religion, and without a severe religion I fear our Church will practically fail." (From "Hursley about Christmas, 1844" ; Coleridge's "Life of Keble," p. 290.)

2. When we examine certain special cases the benefit of regular confession becomes equally apparent. Every pastor is familiar with the difficulty which ignorance, either in the ill-informed, or the misinformed, presents when on a bed of sickness he is helping them to get a sense of their sins. It is not a question of mere book-learning. You may find here and there an old woman, who can read not at all, or only with difficulty, who has a spiritual science worthy of one of the saints. The grace of GOD, acting on a thoughtful mind, and probably the discipline of suffering have trained her. But in most cases how lamentably difficult it is to make the grasp of contrition embrace anything like the multitude of sins. Regular confession would do this, or would tend towards it. And it would arm our poor people against the most dangerous heresy of the day—that which teaches them to dispense with repentance if they can only get to feel comfortable in the idea that their sins are forgiven.

3. In the case of the young it is obvious that the discipline of confession may often prevent acts of sin from ripening into habits of sin. Many a life, now full of bitter memories, would at an early age have been true to GOD if the kindly advice, and warning of the confessor had come before the pleasures and pitfalls of vice. Great as are the advantages of our public school system in the formation of character, and in discouraging priggishness and conceit, they are sometimes

dearly purchased by a precocious and fatal acquaintance with sin. And a boy has no one to whom he can turn, unless a prefect or a big fellow makes him a special friend. The masters know commonly scarcely anything at all of the inner life of their boys : and so they go forth strengthened and armed for the battle of life, but untrained and untutored in the things which belong to the Spirit. We are not suggesting that a system of constantly meddling with boys and girls, and encouraging them to confess faults which they do not feel, would be any improvement. But confession rightly understood is essentially a manly thing ; for it represents the courage of humility, and that is the courage of the true gentleman. Let boys and girls have a wise and gentle confessor to whom they can tell their faults and their difficulties, and our schools will turn out more men and women of the stamp of those who founded England's greatness.

4. The scrupulous form one class, and those who have contracted habits of sin another, which can only be adequately helped by the confessor. To raise the one from despondency, or from consuming all the spiritual energies in fighting against phantoms is a work as arduous as it is necessary, but it is possible through the confessional. In the other case, even the opponents of confession admit that it may be useful.

5. To mention only one other example. Without confession souls could rarely be sustained in those higher forms of piety which are connected with the counsels of perfection. And some may be disposed to say either that there are no counsels of perfection, or that we can safely dispense with them. Let Monseigneur Gerbet answer : " As to Protestants, I understand how the interests of Protestantism have thrown them into this paradox, by which they sapped the base of religious institutions which are vowed to the practice of the Evangelical counsels. But I do not understand how the simplest Christian good sense failed to make known to them

their illusion, while there remain written on the pages of S. Paul : 'Do this ; and you sin not.' 'Do not this ; and you do better.' How do you fail to see that you place man in a detestable alternative ? Will you say that all which is beyond the precept is valueless, and without merit ? Then, adieu to all prolongation of holy prayers : all kindling meditations not prescribed by rule ; adieu to the heroism of piety : adieu to the devotion of the sisters of charity : adieu to the most divine sights which the world presents. On the other hand, will you pretend that all that forms part of strict duty, binding on all : that everyone who has not the charity of S. Vincent of Paul, or the piety of S. Augustine, is on the road to perdition ?"

Thus common sense bears out the distinction which is traced in the gospel. The revival of the religious life amongst us synchronises with the revived use of confession, and the opponents of the one are the opponents of the other. They, on the other hand, who think that in a mechanical age, and when the worship of wealth and success has reached its present pitch, we can dispense with no form of self-denial or of piety : they who bless GOD for raising again among us the homes of the religious, who rejoice to see in the lanes of the city or the wards of the hospital, the sister of charity, will remember that the question of Sacramental Confession involves the further question whether these houses shall grow and multiply, or whether they shall be cast out as having no place in the Church of England.

6. We have reached our limits ; and the social benefits conferred by confession—in themselves an interesting and ample field of enquiry—must be briefly dismissed. Not long ago eminent medical men made themselves responsible for the statement that the undue use of stimulants prevailed widely in the upper and middle classes of society. Confessors could tell how in the struggle against this temptation, confession, and

the discipline of a rule of life, are found to be effectual safeguards. In the coarser but possibly less dangerous form of drunkenness, the sin which is at the root of so much of our social misery, the confessional offers the only reasonable hope of thorough reformation. The universal disuse of stimulants is a chimera; and yet if temperance societies are to succeed they can aim at nothing less. The confessor, on the other hand, while advising total abstinence in certain cases, aims at checking the abuse, and not the legitimate use of stimulants. And he alone can deal with those habits of secret drinking which are the worst and most dangerous of all.

7. The melancholy and despair, which if unchecked end in suicide, can seldom be reached except through the agency of confession: and that fruitful source of social unhappiness—the sense of injury or wrong which is allowed to fester in secret—is another matter in which the benefit to the individual is also a benefit to society. The same may be said of certain forms of dishonesty and wrong: the confessional being often used to bring about restitution. These matters we can only mention, without dwelling on them; and we must treat what is emphatically called the social evil in the same way. Statistics are proverbially unsatisfactory; but probably the following extract, taken from a recent number of the “Guardian,” may be considered significant:

“At Berlin, a few weeks ago, Herr Held read a paper on the moral and social condition of that city, based upon indisputable facts collected by M. Schwabe, President of the Statistical Bureau. The state of affairs is truly deplorable, for, amongst other sad revealments, it appears that out of a population of 833,000, no less than 125,000, or more than one person to every seven, is in receipt of public relief. 169,016 persons, or 20 per cent., live in over-crowded rooms. The woods in the environs swarm with robbers, whom the police, though now and then they make a feeble raid, are powerless

to exterminate, partly owing to the fact that the guardians of public peace receive no moral support from the cultivated classes in the discharge of their duty. Property, and even life, is insecure in all the side streets, and not unfrequently the most audacious onslaughts are made upon unsuspecting passengers along the main thoroughfares. The working classes, unlike our own, are, on the whole, a rough, brutal set, addicted to gross sensuality, and scoffers at the matrimonial bond. Various proposals have been made for preventing the seduction of domestic servants, one of which is the formation of a society for giving kindly advice to females under 35 years of age. The illegitimate births are 17 per cent., and the divorces 10 per cent. upon the number of marriages solemnized. Of 23,000 funerals in 1870, nearly 20,000 were performed without any religious ceremony. There are very few churches. The turpitudes of the stage are fearful. The system of official lotteries prevails to a ruinous extent. At the end of 1867—and considering that the late war has painfully demoralized all classes, we may infer that no improvement has since been effected—65,641, or nearly 10 per cent. of the entire population, were convicted criminals. And, finally, outside the civil tribunals, men propose themselves to the parties to suits as witnesses for a consideration: ‘If you are looking for a witness, sir, take me. I swear for half price. My colleagues demand ten silver groschen, I ask no more than five.’ *Quid plura dicam?* Clearly it is delusion to imagine that the Prussians have any advantage over the French on the score of morality. Facts tend to disperse crude fictions of the imagination.”

Whatever may be thought of some of the considerations which we have placed before our readers, it will be admitted that the subject is of the highest importance. Confession is widely practised; and we do not deny that there is danger of its possible abuse. Indeed, when it is remembered how deli-

cate is the duty of dealing with the inner life of the soul; and when the deficiencies in the technical education of the English clergy (deficiencies which are being rapidly corrected), are taken into account, we cannot but be surprised that on the whole the work has been so well and faithfully performed. The grace of GOD must have accompanied and prompted the revived use of confession, or it would long ago have come to nought amidst open scandals and failure. It is possible that there may have been some rough surgery, and unnecessary pain. The bishops have now to consider what they will do to prevent such possible evils. One thing is certain : they cannot check the practice of confession, except by expelling the Catholic laity from the Church of England ; that is, they cannot check it at all, for the Catholic laity do not mean to be expelled. What, then, will their lordships do? We offer for their consideration, most respectfully, two counsels. One is to obtain a practical acquaintance with the subject, (which probably some of their number possess,) by themselves going to confession. For the subject is a practical one, and can never be adequately understood by theories. It must be seen from within, if all fallacies are to be dispelled.

The other counsel, which we humbly offer, is that their lordships would be pleased to ponder over the following words of Leibnitz, (*" System of Theology,"* p. 271. Paris, 1819) as expressing, in eloquent and just terms, the want which has been felt by many of their lordships' flock, and supplied by many of their faithful clergy :

" It cannot be denied that this entire institution is worthy of the Divine Wisdom ; and assuredly there is nothing in the Christian religion more beautiful or more worthy of praise. . . In fact, the necessity of confession hinders many men from sin, especially those who are not already hardened ; and it gives great consolations to those who have experienced falls. Also, I look upon a pious, devout, and prudent confessor as a

great instrument of GOD for the salvation of souls ; for his counsels help to direct our affections, to enlighten us as to our faults, to make us avoid the occasions of sin, to restore that which has been carried away, to make reparation for scandals, to dispel doubts, to raise up the crushed spirit, in short, to take away or to mitigate all the diseases of the soul ; and if there be scarcely anything more excellent found on the earth than a faithful friend, what a happiness must it be to find one who is bound by the inviolable bond of a Divine Sacrament to keep faith and to succour souls."

Since the above was written, the Report of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury on the subject of Confession has been published. As the report was not presented until the last day of the sessions, no opportunity for its consideration has yet been afforded to the Lower House ; and the document can only be considered as an expression of opinion on the part of the small number of bishops who concurred in it. Whatever weight and authority such opinion deserves this report carries with it ; and no more.

Thus much for the *terminus a quo*. When we turn to the *terminus ad quem*, it is less easy to understand to whom this deliverance of opinion is addressed, or for what purpose it is put forth. If their lordships intended to address their clergy, we should have expected some attempt to solve the practical difficulties of those who understand in the historical sense the commission of the priesthood. On the other hand, we should not have expected a report, which neither Overall nor Jeremy Taylor—not to mention such illustrious worthies as Hooker, Andrewes, Laud, Bramhall, Cosin, Sparrow, Wilson and Keble—could have signed.

If, again, the bishops were speaking to penitents, the case is no better. For to those who have practically solved the question of confession, the theories and limitations of their

lordships must sound like a voice from the clouds. No outsider who reads the report could suppose that English Church people are going to confession in thousands.

To whom then is the report addressed? We do not know; for there is one great omission, which forbids us to suppose that it is addressed to the public of the "Times" newspaper. Not one word is said on that great question, about which alone the public cares, namely, *the absolving power of the priesthood*. If that power exists, it is the idlest waste of words to contend that it must not be used when it is needed. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol lately preached a sermon in one of his cathedrals, in which, if the newspaper reports may be trusted, he drew out very clearly what follows from the admission that a priest of the Church of England has a power committed to him of remitting sins. "Now," said the bishop, "as such power must clearly involve the right and duty of hearing confession, confession being plainly that without which the power could not be exercised, and further, as the Church of England recommends all persons burdened in conscience to come to a priest, and further still, even supplies a form of absolution in one of her services, why is such a commission, so distinct and so unreserved, to be explained away? Why is confession to be discouraged?" The bishop's answer is not clear; but it seems, and perhaps only seems, to deny the absolving power. At all events his lordship discerns what follows from admitting this power to exist. Yet the report of the Upper House altogether avoids this, the vital point of the controversy: and we cannot forget that the committee of bishops was appointed at the instance of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and hence, in all likelihood, the report was from the pen of his lordship.

There is one matter of detail, not noticed in the preceding pages, to which the bishops seem to attach considerable importance; namely, the omission of a prescribed form for

private absolution. The report says: "It is to be noted that for such a case no form of absolution has been prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer; and, further, that the rubric in the First Prayer Book of 1549, which sanctions a particular form of absolution, has been withdrawn from all subsequent editions of the said book."

With all due respect to their lordships, this is not a fair statement of the case. In the Book of 1549 the rubric ran thus: "After which confession the priest shall absolve him after this form; and the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions." But in the subsequent books the removal of this last clause was not, as their lordships imply, the *only* change; for the word *form* was altered and the priest was bidden to absolve him "after this *sort*." That is to say, the priest was no longer tied to any particular form of words, his liberty was enlarged, and he might absolve in any terms equivalent to those contained in the office. When this fact is weighed, the alteration in the rubric leads to a conclusion, which is diametrically opposed to that contained in the report. A further proof that the inference drawn by the bishops cannot be the true one is found in the fact, that it leads to an absurdity. For surely it would be absurd if a priest were first bidden to tell people of the benefit of absolution, and when they came for it, to be obliged to say that he had no absolution to give. It is impossible not to regret the presence of an argument, which betrays rather the keenness of an advocate than the impartiality of a judge, in a solemn report put forth by bishops.

With the remark made at the beginning of the report there will be general agreement: "In the matter of Confession the Church of England holds fast those principles, which are set forth in Holy Scripture, which were professed by the primitive Church, and which were reaffirmed at the English Reformation." No doubt the "English Reformation" is an elastic

phrase : but, if we may venture to interpret it, we suggest that primitive principles were most truly reaffirmed in the famous passage from the Exhortation in the First Book of Edward VI.: " Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the priest ; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to GOD, and the general confession to the Church ; but in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity ; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences ; whereas he hath no warrant of GOD'S Word to the same." May we not trust that these words suggest the true solution of our present difficulties ?

Fiat voluntas DEI.

A. H. WARD.

Studies in Modern Problems.

ABOLITION OF THE ARTICLES:

PART ONE.

I. THEIR ZWINGLIAN ORIGIN.

FEW commentators on the Thirty-nine Articles have taken any trouble to ascertain what were the opinions of those who drew them up, or from what sources they were really derived. It has been the custom with one set of writers to refer them to a Lutheran origin, and to trace their resemblance to the Confession of Augsburg, whilst others have strenuously contended that their natural sense is in accordance with the doctrines that are commonly known as Calvinistic. Others have treated them as if they were simply aimed against Roman doctrine, and were probably meant by their compilers to leave open the questions upon which Protestants were at issue, so long as they could ensure the condemnation of the Papal system by those upon whom they were imposed. Others, again, have maintained that they contain no condemnation of errors of doctrine, but that they embody a protest against practices prevalent in the Church at the time when they were drawn up. The miserable state both of morals and discipline in the Church at this time is not denied on either side, and candid writers of the Roman communion have been forward in admitting it. They themselves speak of the disorders of the Church being such as to excite the hatred of the laity against the clergy. Nearly a century before Luther's outbreak, Cardinal Julian, in his letter to Eugenius IV., had prophesied

pretty accurately, though in general terms, the evils that would arise both to the temporal and spiritual condition of the Church ; and long before that time S. Bernard had complained that the Church, left in peace by infidels and unmolested by heretics, was most dangerously assaulted by the depraved morals of her own children.

The late Bishop (Lloyd) of Oxford, a man far in advance of any theologian of his time in the English Church, was the first who, in the present century, broached this view. And probably, more or less directly from him, there sprang up the idea which first found utterance in the celebrated No. 90 of the "Tracts for the Times," which contained the first systematic attempt to shew that it was possible for persons holding Catholic opinions to sign them. The Bishop (Forbes) of Brechin, in his valuable treatise, has worked this view of the matter, and has given a theological colouring to much which they contain which is ambiguous or awkwardly expressed. But neither the Bishop of Brechin nor the author of No. 90 has ventured to assert that the interpretation he has placed upon the Articles is according to the meaning of those who drew them up ; nor did they attempt to go into the historical aspect of the case, or endeavour to ascertain what was the sense in which they were originally compiled, or in which it was intended they should be signed. Nor, again, was it any part of their plan to investigate the historical facts of their reception from the time of Elizabeth to Charles I., or the bearings of the various alterations in the Prayer Book of the Church of England, upon their signification, down to the Restoration, when the last great change took place, and they were still left standing as a document which the clergy were bound to sign, but by which the laity were in no way fettered.

And here it would be great injustice not to acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to the late learned Archbishop (Laurence) of Cashel for his Bampton Lectures of 1804

Dissenting entirely from the view entertained in those lectures, as the present writer does, he is bound to admit that it was, nevertheless, a most important and valuable means of educating English Churchmen. The purpose of these lectures was to connect the Thirty-nine Articles directly with the Augsburg Confession. The author's imperfect acquaintance with the influence exerted by the Zwinglian party in England between 1549 and 1553 led him to suppose that the opinions Cranmer had imbibed from Osiander and others of the Lutheran party were really represented in the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. and in the Forty-two Articles, both of which belong to the last year of the reign. The Archbishop has shewn conclusively enough what no one would be disposed to dispute, that much of the expressions in all the Reformed Churches is traceable up to that celebrated and moderately-written Confession, almost the earliest attempt at systematising which Protestantism ever made. There can be no doubt that Cranmer, if he could have had his own way, would at one time have been quite content with the Confession of Augsburg, with the single exception of the Article on the Eucharist. He would have expressed his doctrine of Baptism, as, in point of fact, it had been expressed in the new Baptismal service of 1549, and not in the ambiguous (or worse than ambiguous) language of the Twenty-seventh Article, but in the clear and distinct utterance of the Ninth Article of the Augsburg Confession. He would certainly not have spoken of sin after baptism as in our Sixteenth Article, as if the doctrine were connected with the notion of the "Indefectibility of grace once given," but in the orthodox and unambiguous language of the Twelfth Article of the Augsburg Confession, which distinctly condemns this doctrine of the Anabaptists, which was afterwards adopted by Calvin. He would probably have had no objection to the admission of the Twentieth Article of the Augsburg Confession, which states that we are justified by

works as well as faith, and which at first sight is not easily reconcileable with our Eleventh Article, though the elaborate explanation of it, couched, as it is, in untheological language, may be taken as a fair mode of reconciling the two statements. But Cranmer would not have adopted the moderate tone of Melancthon in apologising for the position of the Protestants as due to the errors of practice that had crept into the Church of Rome, or in allowing that the Protestants did not differ from the Roman Church, so far as its doctrines were known from its approved writers. Again, as regards the instances of those practical abuses which are appended to the Twenty-one Articles of the Augsburg Confession, he would have agreed in the condemnation of every particular abuse enumerated. He wanted the Communion in both kinds; he highly approved of the marriage of priests, as he shewed by his marrying twice; he did not absolutely disapprove of confession and absolution; he was anxious to get rid of fasting, as he shewed by taking out a licence from the King to eat meat on fasting days; he concurred in the objections alleged to the monastic state, and to the taking of vows in general; and he would have been satisfied with the last article of that Confession enumerating the abuses in ecclesiastical power, though his own view was distinctly more Erastian than Melancthon's. But, however much or closely Cranmer adhered to the Lutheran faction, it is certain that he could not not get his own way in the alterations introduced by the authority of Somerset and Northumberland in Edward's reign. He probably did not care much about it, but he was overborne by external pressure. All the foreigners who came over were either thorough Zwinglians, or else, like Bucer and the school of Strasburg, held an intermediate position, wishing to compromise matters between the Lutheran view and the Zwinglian; and the result was, as will be seen in the sequel, that, excepting so far as Zwingli and Calvin

agreed with the Augsburg Confession, its terms were not adopted.

Nevertheless, though the Archbishop of Cashel is wholly mistaken in his opinion as to the influence of the views which Cranmer really held, or was supposed to hold, in the reign of Henry VIII., upon the changes introduced in the succeeding reign, he has done the Church of England the greatest service by bridging over the interval between the time when these matters began to be inquired into and the period of the appearance of No. 90. If what is known now had been known by the Church party thirty years ago as to the origin of the Forty-two Articles of Edward VI., the secessions to Rome would have been much more numerous. Till the appearance of the celebrated tract which closed the series of "Tracts for the Times," the view prevalent amongst Churchmen was that the Articles, though ambiguous and awkward, must be taken and interpreted in conformity with the rest of the Prayer Book. No one can deny that the view was a natural one; equally natural, at least, with the view of the Evangelical party, that the Prayer Book must be interpreted so as to mean the same thing with the Thirty-nine Articles. But Churchmen of that day, had they known more of the Forty-two Articles, that is to say if they had not been guided in their interpretation of them by this work of Archbishop Laurence's, would have felt that there was a kind of dishonesty in adopting this course. And if we are asked why this is not felt now, we answer that the position of subscribing the Articles in the widest sense is now by the consent of all parties conceded; that it is now certain that the imponents of the test, as well as those who accept it, are quite at one in discarding the Zwinglio-Calvinistic sense in which they were drawn up. Many, no doubt, may still be found to deny strenuously that this was their original sense; but nobody will deny that, upon the whole, the view itself has all but disappeared from the minds

of the educated members of the Church of England. We should say that the last representative of the Calvinistic view amongst persons who attained to any eminent position in the Church, was the late Bishop (Waldegrave) of Carlisle. But, be this as it may, it is not our province to estimate the amount of Calvinism existing in the present day in the Church of England, the late progeny of the viper that was crushed by the indomitable perseverance of Laud ; but to shew that the Zwinglio-Calvinistic sense was the sense in which they were originally drawn up.

And we may, we think, take it for granted that the principle with which the learned Archbishop of Cashel starts is entirely exploded. No one now would say, in face of the publication of the two Prayer Books of Edward VI. and the knowledge of the alterations that have been introduced into the latter of these two books after the Hampton Court Controversy and the Savoy Conference, "that our Reformation was a progressive work commenced in the reign of Henry and completed under his successor in all its essential parts, without suffering any subsequent alteration of importance." (Laurence, Bampton Lectures, p. 10.)

Another specious argument of this author's will have to be tested by fact. He urges that the articles on Predestination must be of Lutheran complexion because Calvinists are not altogether satisfied with them, and have on several occasions attempted to get them modified. He might have added that in this attempt in Ireland they entirely succeeded, when in 1615 the two houses of Convocation unanimously adopted the phraseology of the Lambeth Articles, which first Elizabeth and then James I. prevented the prelates of the English Church from giving their consent to. It may be observed that the fact that Calvinists have wanted them to be more definite proves no more than that they might have been more explicit than they are ; the real reason of this want of explicitness being

that they are founded on the Zurich concord of 1549, before Calvinism had developed as it afterwards did ; at a time when the philosophical Rationalism of Zwingli still held in check the extravagances of the doctrine of reprobation which Calvin supported, not on principles of abstract reason, but by reference to texts of Scripture.

There is but one English writer who has done justice to the philosophic acumen of Zwingli, a man of clearer head and much more far-sighted than either Luther or Calvin, and who, if he had lived, would probably have exerted a much greater influence on the opinions of Europe than either the Saxon or the French Reformer. His premature death in 1531 inflicted a heavy blow upon Rationalism, and allowed the two lines of thought which have divided Protestantism to go on for near three centuries undisturbed, till the reaction from the infidelity of the eighteenth century towards Catholic truth in the nineteenth has issued in an attempt to reconstruct the Protestant principle on the basis of ignoring differences of doctrine, not only on these points, the controversy on which has quite passed away, but on what formerly were considered fundamental dogmas. Mr. H. B. Wilson, a Bampton Lecturer (on "the Principles of Christian Union,") of nearly fifty years later date than Archbishop Laurence, has seen the necessity for some such amalgamation, if the Christian religion outside the pale of the Roman Church is to be preserved at all. And the Swiss Reformer is entitled to the praise so warmly bestowed upon him by a kindred spirit, of whom it would scarcely be too much to say, that he is almost entitled to the pre-eminence amongst English Rationalists which he has himself assigned to Zwingli amongst the Continental Reformers of the sixteenth century.

"In this country, indeed," says Mr. Wilson, "for many years little justice has been done, as it seems to me, either to the abilities or the motives of this reformer. For no man was

more in advance of his age, of the prejudices of his own Romish education, or of the prejudices of the movement in which he was engaged. We cannot, indeed, praise in him the democratic vehemence with which he destroyed the ecclesiastical framework ; yet it admits of the same plea of local political necessity, which is allowed to palliate many proceedings of Reformers elsewhere ; but for clearness of head and precision of thought and language, none of the Reformers, not even Calvin, surpassed him ; none equalled him in capacity for dealing with theological questions when they are involved in metaphysical abstractions. With respect to the subject immediately before us, he alone of the Continental Reformers perceived that all spiritual influence, and sacramental influence too, must operate according to laws." (Bampton Lectures, p. 187.) This is the divine in favour of whom and to conciliate whose adherents Calvin and Farel were content to suppress their real sentiments in the "Consensus Tigurinus," in exactly the same way as Melancthon had, twenty years before, withdrawn most of the obnoxious tenets of Lutheranism to avoid giving offence to the Roman party at Augsburg.

We may at least take it for granted that there is a *prima facie* apparent discrepancy between the two sets of documents to which the clergy give their adherence. No one, at least no one we have ever met with, professes to like the Prayer Book and the Articles equally. We have, indeed, heard it maintained that there is really no difficulty in reconciling them (a view which it will be seen in the sequel does not commend itself to our judgment), but in the act of reconciling them, we feel sure that there is no living person of any intelligence who has not a secret preference for one or the other ; and if people would but speak out, we believe that their preference in very many cases takes the form of a positive liking for the one and dislike for the other, whilst within the few last years there has sprung up a third party,

who more or less dislike the dogmatic tone of both sets of documents. Of this third party we wish to say no more at present ; but it will scarcely be denied that the two parties who are in earnest, and who divide the religious life of the Church of England between them, one of whom delights to be called Catholic and the other Protestant, are attached respectively to the Prayer Book, as representing the faith of Christendom of old time, or to the Articles, as embodying the doctrines which they think are Scriptural.

The difficulties in which this subject is involved have certainly been felt much more of late years than they have ever been. In the last century there was not learning enough amongst the clergy to appreciate them, and it was not unnatural that candidates for Holy Orders should be content to take the Prayer Book and the Articles on the faith of the National Church in which they had been baptized and educated, and to feel no misgiving about particular forms of expression, which perhaps for the most part never met their eyes after they had once passed their final examination for the priesthood. Such a state of things could never exist long, or continue through such a period as the last forty years, during which there has been such a remarkable application of intellectual power in this country to every subject, whether physical, historical, philosophical, or religious. And especially since the rise of theological colleges amongst us for the purpose of preparing candidates for Holy Orders there must have been a good deal of teaching more or less directly bearing upon the Thirty-nine Articles. Of the nature of this teaching we do not profess to possess much information, but we can scarcely be wrong in conjecturing that it has for the most part taken the form of adapting their ambiguities and looseness of expression to the more definite statements and dogmatic utterances of the Prayer Book. It will be seen that we speak of the Articles as if they formed no part of the Prayer Book.

And it is certain that they neither do belong to it now, nor ever have in past time formed part of the Book of Common Prayer, with which they have for more than a century almost invariably been printed, both by the Queen's printer and by the authority of the Delegates of the Press, both at Oxford and Cambridge. They have no right to appear there, because they never formed part of the Sealed Book, as may be seen by any one who will take the trouble to refer to any of the editions which bear the date of 1662, or to the photographic copy which has lately been issued, exhibiting the different corrections made or suggested by the divines of the Savoy Conference. In the old folio editions of the Prayer Book they were generally bound up at the end of the book, together with the Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical. Gradually they came to be added at the end of Prayer Books of smaller size without the Canons ; but it was not till quite of recent years that the printer ventured, in defiance of law, to insert among the contents, after the form of prayer for the first day of the King's reign, as a thirty-first item, "Articles of Religion." This point is by no means of small importance, for the placing of them side by side with the Book of Common Prayer is like giving them a position and raising them to a dignity to which they can lay no claim. And if it had not been for this accident, they would probably never have been looked upon as being in any way co-ordinate with the Prayer Book as an authority on points of dogmatic teaching.

The difference between the two documents in this respect has been very much neglected, and the supreme Court of Appeal has laid down the ridiculous *dictum* that their judgments are to be guided in the first instance by appeal to the Articles, and only in the second instance, where these are ambiguous, to the Prayer Book. We do not scruple to say that we think it impossible to conceive a position more entirely unwarrantable on any principles of reason. Not only

are the Articles the product of a most unlearned age, but there is scarcely any one well-read enough in the writings of the age in which they were drawn up to be able to estimate the meaning of the phrases used in them as they were applied to existing practices of the time; whilst those who, like Mr. Gorham and his advisers in the celebrated trial on the subject of Baptism, thoroughly conversant as they were with the principles of the Reformers, which were identical with those advocated in the line of defence adopted by them, were entirely ignorant of theological science, which is absolutely necessary to any one who will give a rational and harmonious account of the Prayer Book and Articles combined. We shall certainly never again witness the preposterous attempt to impose subscription to the Articles in the original sense intended by their compilers. The panic created by the publication of No. 90, drove the Heads of Houses at Oxford into the proposal of a measure which would soon have recoiled on their own heads; and the attempt to discover the original sense as intended by their compilers would soon have resulted in the clear demonstration that that sense which probably most of them believed to be Lutheran, was on the contrary Zwinglio-Calvinistic. Fortunately that measure was so unpopular, that it was instantly withdrawn, the feeling of people in general being that they would not stand any imposition of additional tests of belief. And the subscription to the Articles has been allowed quietly to go on, people reconciling them as best they may be able to their preconceived notions. And perhaps if the shrewd statesman who in the last century described the Church of England as possessing a Popish liturgy, Calvinistic Articles, and an Arminian clergy, had lived in our day, he would have seen but little reason for changing his opinion or altering the mode in which he expressed it.

We should be sorry ourselves to speak of the clergy of the

Church of England as being Arminians, nevertheless the phrase is intelligible enough as representing that the great mass of them neither were at the time when the expression was used, nor are at the present day, Calvinistic in their views. If the Evangelical revival of the commencement of this century, led in some degree to a propagation of Calvinism, those opinions have nearly died out, as the party itself has become almost extinguished. Bishop Tomline's "Elements of Christian Theology," with its "Scriptural exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion," became, in spite of the intense ignorance of its writer, the orthodox text-book for students in divinity for the first thirty years of this century. Burnet still held its ground because of its antagonism to Roman doctrine, till the accidental discovery of the unpublished remainder of Beveridge's work enabled it to be printed entire. But it is plain that Beveridge, learned as he was, had little knowledge of the history of the Reformation and of the time when the Articles were drawn up, and his book, which enjoyed a sort of popularity for a few years, has now gone by, because of its evading any decision on the questions that were dividing people's opinions in the sixteenth century, and always referring to the fathers in defence of the expressions used in the Articles, though the sense of the expressions quoted from the fathers is not always exactly that which would naturally be attributed to the similar phrases of the Articles. But in all these expositions, and most palpably in the Bishop (Harold Browne) of Ely's, which for the present appears to have superseded them all, there is a perpetual screwing of the language of the Reformers to make it suit the preconceived view of the writer. This is perhaps more evident in the Bishop's remarks on the Apostolical Succession than in any other part of his work.

Nothing was further from the minds of the Reformers when they drew up their Article on ministering in the congre-

ation, than any idea of an Apostolical succession of bishops. Not only had Luther himself attached no significance to this doctrine, but the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549 could make no pretence to the upholding it, inasmuch as after Zwingli's death at Zurich no ministers had any pretence to ordination, and Calvin himself had never been even in Priest's orders. If this interpretation be given to the Article, that it does not exclude those from the right to minister in the congregation who have been ordained by bishops, that is no doubt true, and of course we should ourselves maintain that the only consistent way of receiving the Prayer Book and the Article together, is to interpret the general, confused, and ambiguous statement of the Article by the definite, plain, and easy words of the preface to the Ordinal, that "no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful priest or deacon, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination." But this is a very different thing from saying that this was the intention of those who drew up the Article, for it is historically demonstrable that that was not their meaning.

Now if it is admitted, as surely it will be on all hands, that subscription to the Articles in the modified form in which it is now imposed upon the clergy of the Church of England, commits no one to agreement with the known or supposed sentiments of the compilers, it follows that it is quite open to all to discuss those opinions freely, to agree with them or differ from them, as after historical investigation they may find that they are or are not in accordance with their own views and beliefs.

It is necessary that this should be understood as a preliminary to the present investigation which has for its object to show that the Articles were not intended by their original framers to contain open questions, but were really drawn up

entirely under the influence of persons who had been brought up in the school of Zwingli, and who were developing in the direction of Calvinism. It must be remembered, then, that though Calvinism is a later development, yet the heresies of Luther and Zwingli were absolutely contemporaneous and almost entirely independent of each other, both of them having a common origin in the sudden spread of the knowledge of the text of Scripture, and both of them having been extensively promoted by the abominable sale of indulgences by Tetzel in Saxony and by Samson in Switzerland, for the sake of procuring money to enable Leo. X. to adorn and complete the splendid Church of S. Peter's at Rome.

And here for the benefit of such readers as only know the history of the Reformation from English sources, it may be as well briefly to describe what will appear more in detail in the course of the following pages—how the English Reformation wholly followed in the line adopted by the Swiss Reformers, and had little or nothing to do except indirectly with Lutheranism. Though English writers on the subject have, owing to their ignorance of the principles and details of the acts of the foreign Reformers, failed to see this, yet the English Church has always been classed by foreign writers under the same head with the Reformed Churches of France and Switzerland, as distinguished from the Lutheran. That is to say, the Church of England is generally recognized as following that one of the two streams—in which it cannot be denied that Protestantism has flowed, and which are conveniently designated by the names of Luther and Calvin,—with which the name of Calvin is identified. There is indeed a third stream, which is entitled to be distinguished from the numerous little rivulets into which Protestantism has separated. The Baptists—and here of course we make no distinction between the two classes of General and Particular Baptists, who may be respectively assigned to their different leaders,

the one as adopting all the horrors of an unmitigated Calvinism, the other having stopped short at the doctrine of justification by faith, without being able to follow it to its legitimate development—are lineally descended from the Anabaptists of the middle of the sixteenth century; and in spite of the wonderful eccentricities of which the early adherents of this sect were guilty, there is no doubt that as regards the main principle from which they derive their name, they were more consistent than either Lutherans or Zwinglians. We class Protestants here under these two heads, for Calvinism was of later growth. The three sects had all adopted the principle of appeal to Scripture, interpreted by each individual for himself, with no other guide than the comparison of different passages of Scripture could provide them with.

But Luther had stopped short at the enunciation of the principle of Justification by faith. Zwingli, who possessed far more philosophical acumen than Luther, had, long before Calvin appeared upon the stage of history, pushed this principle to the length which has usually been described as the distinctive tenet of Calvinism. Luther never saw, or at least never fully admitted that his principle of Justification by faith really excluded the efficacy of the Sacraments. Zwingli consistently took a further step, and asked the question as to the origin of faith in the individual mind, and solved it satisfactorily to himself in precisely the same way in which Calvin, whether independently or not, accounted for it also, by the arbitrary selection of certain persons to salvation, and the reprobation of others, by the will of GOD, without regard to their good or bad works. The inconsistency in which Zwingli was involved and which prevented him from developing in the way in which his followers in modern times have developed, was owing to his inability to free himself from the belief in the doctrine of the eternity of future punish-

ment. He died at the early age of forty-seven on the field of Cappel, and nothing but the assurance of personal election could have sustained the faith of the Reformer, who in the last few years of his life seems to have been actuated by political ambition, which, as in the case of the Protector Cromwell a century later, seemed to override the real though fanatical religious ideas which had actuated him. But Zwingli was not only the distant ancestor of the Rationalists of this day. He was also the immediate father of the English Reformation. This will appear hereafter as we proceed.

Much as the excesses of the early Reformers are to be regretted and condemned, it must not be forgotten that they were provoked by the abuse of Papal power in the sale of indulgences and the miserable state of morals amongst Churchmen, which was in part caused by this and other abuses. The Swiss and the Saxon Reformer were born within a year of each other, Luther on the 10th of November, 1483, and Zwingli January 1, 1484. The former may be said to appear first on the page of history in 1517, and the latter had already begun to preach against Church doctrines, in 1516. But we are not concerned here to estimate the deviation of his teaching from the Catholic standard of orthodoxy till after the year 1518. He had early been ordained a priest by the bishop of Constance, and his preparation for the great work of a Reformer had been a profligate and dissolute life as a priest, which is thus glossed over by one of his greatest admirers: "Zwingli, though superior to the generality of the clergy of his day, had yet more than once in the early part of his ministry suffered himself to be led away by youthful passion. It is not easy to estimate the effect on a soul of the corrupting atmosphere in which it dwells." (D'Aubigné, p. 230.)

We are not, however, further concerned with Zwingli than is consistent with our purpose of estimating the effect of his teaching on the opinions of the English Reformers of the reign

of Edward VI. Already in 1522 he had usurped to himself the title of bishop and pastor of Zurich (D'Aubigné, p. 249), and had proceeded to marry a widow named Anna Reinhard, but had not the courage to admit his marriage publicly ; his Protestant biographer allows that this was a culpable weakness in a man usually so resolute. (D'Aubigné, p. 253.) But the first public appearance of Zwingli's doctrines is at a council held by the Council at Zurich, January 29, 1523, when Zwingli proposed his celebrated sixty-seven theses, and the Senators decreed that, not having been confuted by any one, he should be at liberty to preach in the Canton anything that could be established by Holy Scripture. As it is of the utmost importance that a correct estimate should be formed of the career and development of the opinions of the Swiss Reformer, we here insert this his first public manifesto, translated from the original Latin, and slightly abbreviated :

THE SIXTY-SEVEN ARTICLES OR CONCLUSIONS
PROPOUNDED BY ULRIC
ZWINGLI, A.D. 1523.

“ It is blasphemy to say that the Gospel needs the sanction of the Church ; the sum of which is that CHRIST by His innocence redeemed us from death and reconciled us to the FATHER. He is therefore the only way of salvation, and he who points out any other is a thief of souls. They therefore err who raise other doctrines to the same rank with those of the Gospel, for CHRIST alone is our Leader, and Head of believers, who without Him are dead ; whilst those who live in Him are children of GOD and form the Catholic Church, and none can act without CHRIST any more than members can act without a head ; but as these latter so acting would be mad, so Christians are mad who legislate without CHRIST, and thus the traditions of Churchmen are the origin of all mad-

ness, as they do not agree with CHRIST the Head. The will of GOD can only be learned from the Word of GOD, which Christians ought to labour to get preached everywhere purely, for he who believes it will be saved, but he who disbelieves shall be condemned. And in the Gospel we learn that human traditions are useless.

“CHRIST is the only High-priest, and they who give themselves out for high-priests derogate from His glory. CHRIST offered up Himself on the Cross for the sins of the faithful; hence the Mass is no sacrifice, but only a commemoration and seal of redemption in CHRIST, Who is our only Mediator through Whom GOD gives us all things; and therefore we want no other intercessor, and our prayers for others are only available through CHRIST. He is our justice, and our works are only good as done in Him, but not good so far as they are ours. CHRIST despised riches, and they dishonour Him who seek them. No Christian is bound to do anything which CHRIST has not commanded, and therefore the Pope's orders about butter and cheese are mere impostures. Time and place are in man's power, to interfere with which is an infringement on Christian liberty. Hypocrisy is displeasing to GOD, and pretences of sanctity before men, such as hoods and shaven heads, are to be eschewed. All Christians are brothers of CHRIST, and no one is to be called Father. Hence all sects and factions are to be condemned. What GOD does not forbid may be done. Hence marriage is open to all. Spiritual persons sin if they do not marry, if they find they have not the gift of continence. And the vow of chastity is mere arrogance and not to be imposed by any one.

“Excommunication is only to be pronounced by the Church with the bishop, and then only for public offences. Things stolen from Churches must not be restored to monks and priests, but must be given to the poor if restitution is difficult. The power of popes and bishops and spiritual persons has no

foundation in Scripture, but magistrates have authority by Scripture, and to them if they are Christians belongs all jurisdiction; and obedience is due to them if they command things not against GOD, to Whose will their laws ought to be conformable. They have power of life and death, and they are entitled to the bodily assistance of those whom they aid by their counsel and for whom they have to give account. They may however be deposed if they act against GOD. True worshippers worship GOD in spirit and in truth, not with loud prayers before men; whereas hypocrites do all to be seen by men, and hired singers have only in view pay or the praise of men. No one ought to give offence, and those who take unnecessary offence ought to be better instructed. There is no greater scandal than the prohibition of marriage to priests, and the permission of concubines for money. Only GOD can remit sins, and He only through JESUS CHRIST; and Confession therefore is mere consultation, and works of satisfaction are mere human traditions. CHRIST bore all our sorrows; it is therefore blasphemy to speak of penitential works. And any one who refuses to remit any single sin is doing the devil's work, as also are they who for pay remit sins. There is no purgatory in Scripture, and the judgment of the dead is known only to GOD. Yet persons may pray for the dead if they like; but any lying definitions of time, as for instance where gain is made by remitting seven years' penalty for mortal sin, is diabolical.

"All idea of priestly character is unknown to Scripture, which only recognizes preachers of the word. Those who acknowledge faults are not to be punished, nor those who persist in them, except so far as the magistrate deems it good for public advantage. Rulers of the Church must be humble, or else their perdition is at hand.

"Finally, I am willing to dispute on tithes, baptism of infants, and confirmation, with any one that likes."

It will not be thought that we are describing this document unfairly if we say that it amounts to a denial of the supernatural element as existing in Sacraments or other ordinances of the Church ; that, as regards Church government, it is consistently Erastian ; and that it declines any positive definition on the subject of Baptism. The doctrine of baptismal grace was preserved to a certain extent amongst all the reformers, by their fear of the excesses of which the Anabaptists were guilty as regards civil and political government, the re-baptizing of converts, and certain other doctrines of morality and religion. They were hardly at this time formed into a sect, but individuals had pushed the doctrine of appeal to Scripture, which both the Saxon and Swiss Reformers insisted upon, to an uncomfortable extent, though none had as yet suffered death for their opinions.

Yet though Luther and Zwingli were both preserved from developing into the denial of baptismal grace by the heresy of the Anabaptists, there was little in common between the two men's teaching beyond the appeal to Scripture, and the necessity that arose, in order to maintain that appeal, of denying the truth of many doctrines which manifestly could not be proved from Scripture in any more satisfactory way than the practice of infant baptism could be defended by express instances produced from Scripture. Zwingli was far more far-sighted and consistent in his rationalism than the Saxon Reformer, who was conservative enough to desire to retain in the Church all that was not, as he thought, manifestly contrary to Scripture ; whilst Zwingli's desire was to get rid of everything that could not be proved from Scripture.

He may be considered the father of modern Rationalism ; but his system was prevented from developing more quickly, first, by the necessity for opposing the spread of Anabaptist opinions ; and, secondly, by the early death of its founder in

1531. The doctrine of justification by faith was, no doubt, common to the two Reformers ; but it was not so prominent in Zwingli's creed, which was far more negative than Luther's. Indeed the jealousy that existed between the men would have prevented either of them adopting the shibboleths of the other. The heresy of the Anabaptists, when it spread to Switzerland, drew out in bold relief the real opinions of Zwingli with regard to the Sacrament of Baptism. The weapon with which Zwingli opposed them was the proposition that Baptism may be administered under the new dispensation, exactly as Circumcision was under the old ; and that consequently children of believing parents, being as such children of GOD, are entitled to Christian Baptism, which bears its testimony to the fact. This is the earliest appearance of this theory of Christian Baptism, and it differs from Luther's in that when *he* was pressed with the same difficulty, he resorted to the explanation that "faith was imputed to infants, though they could not possess it."

And here it is remarkable that Bullinger, who was Zwingli's successor at Zurich, somewhat receded from the ground taken up by his predecessor. He does not, indeed, shrink from the defence of Infant Baptism on the score that the children of Christians are entitled to it because they are already, by virtue of their birth, in covenant with GOD ; but being puzzled how to defend the baptism of persons whose Christianity might be somewhat doubtful, he resorted to Luther's method, and used, as a subsidiary argument, the doctrine of imputed faith—*i. e.*, faith is imputed for righteousness—and even where faith does not exist, the faith itself is imputed. They all felt the difficulty that Infant Baptism could not, in any satisfactory sense, be proved from Scripture, and they felt that they were unwilling to offend people's prejudices by giving up the practice ; or, what is more probable,

they were aware of the impossibility of getting people to go with them such extreme lengths as that.

As regards the Sacrament of the Eucharist, they were more distinctly and palpably at issue, there being no point on which Luther and his immediate followers were more obstinate than the literal interpretation of the words, "This *is* My Body." Zwingli, on the contrary, from the first defended the position that *is* means *represents*, and explains, as early as the year 1525 how, when he was hard pressed for an explanation of this view, a phantom appeared to him (he could not say whether black or white), and in a dream directed him to the parallel passage, "It *is* the LORD'S passover," which he considered a conclusive argument on the matter. And thus on neither of these important particulars was there any agreement in the Saxon and the Swiss Reformations. The next dogmatic assertions of the Zwinglian school emanate from Berne in the year 1528. The movement, which seems to originate at Zurich, spreads first to Berne, and thence to Geneva ; but till the rise of Calvin there was no mind to control its course which could bear any comparison with that of the fearless Rationalist, Zwingli. The conference that decided the adhesion of Berne to the cause of Zwingli was held in January, 1528, when Kolb and Haller maintained the following theses, from which it will be seen how wisely, in a contest where ignorant laity were to be judges, the appeal was made to the letter of Scripture :

THE TEN ARTICLES WHICH KOLB AND
HALLER OFFER TO DEFEND AT
BERNE, JANUARY, A.D. 1528.

"1. The Christian Church, whose one Head is CHRIST, has its origin and abides in the Word of GOD.

"2. It makes no laws besides the Word of GOD ; therefore

all human traditions are obligatory only so far as they are founded on the Word of GOD.

“ 3. CHRIST is our sole Redemption and Satisfaction for sin ; therefore to seek any other merit of satisfaction is to renounce CHRIST.

“ 4. It cannot be proved from Scripture that the Body and Blood of CHRIST are really and corporally in the Eucharist.

“ 5. The Mass, in which CHRIST is offered to the FATHER for the sins of the living and the dead, is a blasphemy against the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST, and abominable before GOD.

“ 6. As CHRIST alone died for us, so is He to be adored as the sole Mediator between GOD and the faithful. It is therefore repugnant to the Word of GOD to put forth any dead persons as mediators.

“ 7. That there is a purgatory cannot be found in Scripture. All Masses and other offices for the dead, of whatever kind, are useless.

“ 8. The making of images for worship is repugnant to Scripture. If, therefore, they are proposed for worship they must be destroyed.

“ 9. Matrimony is forbidden to no class of men in Scripture, but is allowed to all for the sake of avoiding fornication.

“ 10. As a whoremonger, according to Scripture, is to be excommunicated, it follows that a state of impure celibacy, because of the scandal it gives, is more to be condemned in the priestly order than in any other class.”

Now, no one can read these two documents, representing the earliest form of Zwinglianism propounded at Zurich in 1523, and the slightly-developed modes of expression adopted by the populace of Berne five years later, without seeing that they differ widely both from what Luther had as yet preached, and that they exercised no influence over his future

teaching, except in the way of repelling him and his followers from the line taken up by the Swiss Reformers.

From Berne the Reformation speedily reached Basle, when, after the successful issue of the proposition that marriage was open to all, Ecolampadius proceeded to set an example to other priests by marrying Keller's widow, Wilibrandis. This event produced the celebrated saying of Erasmus, that so far from regarding Luther's affair a tragedy, he was inclined to regard it as a comedy, every act of the play being distinguished by a wedding. From Basle the influence of the new doctrines spread, under the guidance of Farel, to Neuchatel, and the rapid development of the two forms of doctrine resulted in an extreme jealousy and hatred felt by their heads for each other. These feelings were by no means allayed by the apparent concord forced upon the two parties at the Conference of Marburg. Luther had spoken of Zwingli as a man ignorant of every science, and as deserving the hatred of all good men for the way in which he had handled the Word of GOD ; whilst Zwingli, in his turn, had professed his own entire independence of Luther. Meanwhile, Zwinglianism was spreading far and wide in Switzerland, and before 1529, when the colloquy of Marburg was opened, had extended to Strasburg, Ulm, and other cities of Upper Germany, and already embraced Constance, S. Gall, Schaffhausen, Berne, and Basle. No wonder that Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, should have seen the importance of uniting the two parties of Protestants.

The name of Protestant had originated in the Protest made at Spires, April 15, 1529, and that protest contains the whole essence of Protestantism, which consists of the appeal of the individual to Scripture in support of what he believes or chooses to disbelieve. But before the name had come into existence, its adherents had parted into various companies, the most prominent of which were the Lutherans, the Zwin-

glians, and, thirdly, the Anabaptists, far more consistent than the other two. But to re-unite the three sections on any political basis was simply impossible, as the Anabaptist party protested not only against ecclesiastical, but political government; and it was felt to be of the last importance to combine the Saxon and the Swiss Reformers under one formula, if it were possible. For this purpose the Landgrave of Hesse had summoned to Marburg the leading spirits of both parties. But Luther's impetuosity and Zwingli's irony had already crossed swords, and very hard things had been said, and, what was worse, printed, by both these reformers, against each other; and there was not the slightest chance of any permanent concord. And the conference ended, after nothing but disputes whether the presence in the Eucharist was real or not, with a declaration that, as they could not agree upon this point, the Reformers had consented not to consider this as a fundamental. Nothing, perhaps, in the whole history of the Reformation is so remarkable as the pertinacity with which Luther all his life long, and his followers for generations after him, insisted on the literal interpretation of the words *Hoc est Corpus Meum*.

Immediately after Luther's death, and long subsequently to that time, we find the Swiss and other Reformers inveighing against his obstinacy in adhering to this doctrine of the Real Presence. À Lasco, in March, 1546, writing to Bullinger, speaks of the delusion under which Luther laboured as regards this matter of the signs, and plainly states, as all the Swiss school everywhere state, that Sacraments confer no grace, but countersign the grace that people properly prepared bring to them. Similarly, Bullinger to Melancthon, a month later, speaks of the grace in Sacraments being exactly on a par with Abraham's receipt of Circumcision, a Sacrament, Sign, or Obsignation, of the righteousness of Faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised. That this doctrine

was spreading as early as 1548 in England is shown by another letter of À Lasco's, of February 19 of this year, in which he notices the ill-feeling of English people towards Melancthon, and says, "all who have influence there are exceedingly well disposed towards Philip," *all* meaning here only Cranmer and those in his immediate confidence, who as yet hoped to unite the Lutheran and Zwinglian schools in a kind of concord which might hold its ground against Roman doctrine. But Lutheranism, as such, had never made any progress in England, so as to be able to resist the current of opinion towards Calvinism, as it did for so many years in Germany. Consubstantiation made no way in England, and this belief is not to be accounted for on Luther's part on any other principle than that personal pride would not allow him to recede from a statement which he had frequently insisted upon in public, the most remarkable inconsistency being that he pertinaciously asserts the equality of all Christians as priests, and denies any special power of consecrating the elements to exist in the priesthood.

The Marburg Conference was preliminary to the Augsburg Confession. It is not to be wondered at, considering the moderate tone adopted by Melancthon in that celebrated Confession presented to the Emperor in June 1530, that the Swiss divines were not mixed up with it at all. All the efforts of the Landgrave of Hesse to unite the Lutherans and the Zwinglians, whom he carefully distinguished from the Anabaptists, were of no avail. The Lutherans were extremely fearful of a defection of Philip to the Zwinglian party, whom they hated as much as they did the Anabaptists, with whom they chose always to confound them. No further attempts were made after this time to reconcile the Lutheran and the pure Zwinglian interests; and so bitter were the feelings of the Lutheran party towards those they suspected of being Sacramentarians, that when the exiles from England in the reign

of Mary attempted to find refuge in the towns where Lutheran doctrines were held, they were peremptorily refused permission even to reside a few weeks amongst them. It was in vain that À Lasco and others disclaimed the doctrine imputed to them ; viz., that they disbelieved in the presence of CHRIST in the Sacrament of the Altar ; Westphal and his partizans everywhere persuaded the magistrates to expel them, and the unfortunate French and Dutch settlers in London who had been harboured by Edward VI., and granted a status in London and Glastonbury, and treated as if their faith was identical with the Protestantism of England, were disowned by Lutherans, who, though they had so much in common with them, were exasperated against them because they would not submit to the precise definition of Consubstantiation. This was the point that separated the Lutherans not only from the followers of Zwingli, but even from the school of Strasburg, headed by Bucer, Capito, and Hedio, who always for many years after this time acted the part of mediators, first between the Saxon and the Zurich opinions, and afterwards between the Lutherans of Saxony and the Genevese under Calvin. Bucer, especially, was remarkable for involving this subject in a mist of words, so as to unite the two views in England in the reign of Edward VI. ; but Cranmer and his followers were in a gradually decreasing minority, and were being steadily overborne all the period of Edward's reign by the prevalence of Zwinglio-Calvinistic views which had been imported by the exiles of Henry's reign from Zurich, and which were fostered under the advice and with the assistance of Bullinger, who had succeeded to Zwingli's office and to a portion of his influence. It was of no use for Martyr, who had deviated far more widely from Lutheran views than the school of Strasburg had, to write to Bucer as he did from Oxford, June 15, 1549, to represent that they did not really differ, since he himself admitted that com-

municants partook of the *Res Sacramenti*, by the mind and by faith. The distinction between the two opinions was clear, because Martyr denied and Bucer asserted that the glorified Body of CHRIST could be in more places than one ; and Bucer believed that the Body of CHRIST was exhibited, Martyr only that it was in some way received by faith. The one asserted a Real Presence of some kind, the other entirely denied any in the elements. Bucer's singular mode of getting rid of Martyr's accusation of him as maintaining a local presence was this. "CHRIST exhibits Himself at the same moment and truly by the Word and by the Sacraments, present to us although we are existing in many places ; but we see and apprehend Him present by faith only, without any idea of place."

Nevertheless Zwingli presented the Emperor with an account of his faith, which, outspoken as it is, is one of the clearest and most intelligible documents produced in Reformation times. We are not concerned with noticing its divergence from the type of Lutheran doctrine, nor are we going to write any history of the assembly summoned by the Emperor to discuss matters of faith at Augsburg ; but it is necessary for our purpose that we should give a slight analysis of the Zwinglian Confession. It is tolerably consistent, as far as heresy can be consistent, with the exception of its adopting the doctrine of election, as it was a few years later enunciated by Calvin. We need not say anything of the fairly orthodox expressions as regards the doctrine of the TRINITY, or the Pelagian or semi-Pelagian way in which the doctrine of original sin is treated. The important fact for our present subject is that Zwingli declines to pronounce the damnation of heathen infants, because the election of GOD is free and precedes, and does not follow faith. Therefore some of them may be among the elect. The children of Christians are, however, undoubtedly, by virtue of their birth, members of

the Church, in the same way as Jewish children belonged* to the Jewish Church. The Church, however, is taken in three senses: first as the body of the elect, who are ordained to eternal life, and who are true believers ; no one can be certain of another, but each may be certain for himself, that he belongs to this number : secondly, for all who profess Christianity, and appear Christians to other men, as Judas did to the other Apostles ; and even this Church is sometimes addressed by the writers of the New Testament as elect : thirdly, for a particular branch of the Church, such as that of Rome or Lyons.

Consequently Sacraments cannot confer grace, but are only given as a public testimony of the grace which they have who come to them. Thus faith is previously required of an adult as a qualification for Baptism, and for an infant the faith of the parents testifies that he is already a member of the Church of CHRIST. Consequently the Anabaptists are in error for refusing Baptism to infants, who are admitted into the visible Church, though no one can pronounce that they belong to the invisible Church of the Elect, a thing which can only be known for certain to GOD and to the individual who is certain that he possesses faith. Zwingli speedily arrived at the legitimate conclusion from the doctrine of justification by faith, which, however, has been repudiated by Lutherans, though afterwards adopted by Calvin. In the other Sacrament the presence of CHRIST is not real, but exists only in the contemplation of it by faith. And the passages of Scripture and the fathers which speak on this subject in strong language are all figurative.

The tone of the whole document is most arrogant, and the writer propounds his arguments from Scripture with the utmost confidence, implying that they are quite unanswerable. The whole Confession is comprised in twelve articles, with a few Greek words inserted, and several half lines quoted from

Roman poets, with what looks very like a display of learning. The tenth and eleventh distinguish the respective offices of the preacher or prophet, and the magistrate ; and the last ends like the last of the Forty-two Articles of Edward VI, with the assertion of the eternal damnation of the wicked, after denying that there is any purgatory, on the ground that the belief in it would interfere with the belief in the Atonement wrought by CHRIST. Every one of the positions is supported by evidence from Scripture, which the writer thinks irrefragable ; and the whole Confession ends with an impassioned appeal to the Emperor not to fight against GOD, but to join in digging out by the roots the Roman errors, and an enumeration of the past life and virtues of the writer, as well as of the excellent character of his followers who had received the Gospel of CHRIST, whose cause he exhorts the Emperor to adopt for the future, in the same way as hitherto he has abetted the Roman system. It is dated from Zurich, July 3, 1530. Exactly a year afterwards, in July, 1531, he addressed a similar missive to the Most Christian King, which is somewhat more diffuse, but upon the whole runs over the same ground, with the addition of some arguments derived from philosophical considerations and from Scripture texts. That was at a time when Zwingli had become a statesman, and had conceived the magnificent project of uniting a Swiss and Saxon and French confederacy against the Pope and the Emperor. No one need wonder that Zwinglians could not be admitted into the conference of Protestants who represented their faith to the Emperor at Augsburg, when it is remembered that the Marquis of Brandenburg and the other Saxon Princes were present at the solemn Mass at which the Emperor assisted on June 20, and objected to take part in the procession of the Emperor on Corpus CHRISTI day, because only one part of the Sacrament was exhibited. At this time they were inclined to give up the belief in the reality

of the thing being dependent upon the character of the recipient.

The death of Zwingli in 1531 had a most important effect in checking the spread of Pelagianism. Zwingli had consistently gone on to deny the efficacy of Baptism and its necessity, on the ground that original sin was only a malady which did not expose mankind to the danger of eternal punishment, and asserted that it is only an inclination to sin by means of self-love; that CHRIST'S death had redeemed all mankind in such sense that no one would perish unless he were guilty of some crime; and that all children of heathens, or children of Christians, would alike be condemned or acquitted according to the arbitrary will of GOD. He was the originator of the theory that goes by the name of Calvinism. But not only has the name overridden that of Zwingli, but the doctrine of original sin has been entirely altered, there being no Swiss Reformer to succeed Zwingli in his audacious rationalism. On the point of original sin, the Augsburg Confession also condemns Zwinglianism most pointedly, though not by name.

We are not specially concerned with the other Swiss Confessions of Faith which were formed upon the Zwinglian model. That of Basle, commonly called the First Confession of Basle, is of the same date as the Confession of Augsburg. The Second Confession of Basle, which is also sometimes designated the First Helvetic Confession, is of 1536, and exhibits the influence of Bucer and others of the Strasburg school in the use of more general and vague expressions than the precise and intelligible statements of Zwingli. The point which is desirable to draw out is this, that there is a wide difference between the Lutheran and Zwinglian faith, which the patched-up concord of Marburg really did nothing to bridge over; and that these two reformers regarded each other with the uttermost bitterness, Zwingli disdaining to be spoken of as a follower of Luther because, as he alleges, he preached the gospel in 1516 in

Switzerland ; whereas Luther affirmed that the Swiss reformer wanted to deprive him of the glory of first preaching JESUS CHRIST, and even went the length of saying that either himself or Zwingli must be a minister of Satan. The two forms of Confession indeed are at issue on many points, but especially as regards the 10th Article of the Augsburg Confession, which appeared in several different forms, so that it is difficult to say which is to be regarded as authoritative. Probably the form "that the Body and Blood of CHRIST are exhibited with the Bread and Wine to those who partake of the LORD'S Supper" may be as Luther wrote it ; and the other "that the Body and Blood of CHRIST are truly present and given to those who partake" may be Melancthon's. Either of them contains an assertion of a Real Presence which Zwingli would have abhorred as mystical and unreasonable.

The next important document which bears upon the meaning of the compilers of the Forty-two Articles is the Catechism of the Genevan Church, drawn up by Calvin, and bearing date November 28th, 1545. At this period the Mass had been abolished, under the influence of Farel, for nine years, and a Confession of Faith, drawn up jointly by Farel and Viret, had been adopted by the Council, the principal points of discipline being the monthly celebration of the LORD'S Supper, and the reservation to the Church of the power of excommunication. Here too the Anabaptists had penetrated, and by their excesses both of doctrine and practice had been the means of preventing the Genevese reformation taking a bolder flight than it as yet had done. It had already discarded ecclesiastical terms, Farel having a distinct objection to the term TRINITY and others which do not appear in Scripture. In this point the Bernese were somewhat at issue with the Genevese, who were approaching more nearly to the ideas of Zwingli and the men of Zurich. Ecclesiastical affairs had been somewhat interrupted at Geneva by a quarrel between

the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, which had resulted in the expulsion both of Calvin and Farel in the year 1538. Three years later the civil authorities repented of their rash act, and recalled Calvin from Strasburg to Geneva, when Calvin drew up a new and elaborate scheme of polity, consisting of 168 articles, which has formed the basis of all subsequent organization in the so-called "Reformed Churches" of Holland, France, Switzerland, Scotland, and in the United States of America. And it is only the accidental circumstance of the close relations of Church and State in England that prevented this country from adopting the same system in the reign of Elizabeth, when Calvinistic principles had overridden the Zwinglian model on which the Church had been reformed in the days of Edward VI.

The popular exposition of this official document may be read in the "Catechismus Genevensis" which came out at the end of the year 1545, a little more than a year before the accession of Edward VI. It contains a somewhat elaborate explanation of what was held by the Genevan Congregation, adopting the Apostles' Creed in its exact letter with an explanation; then proceeding like our own Catechism which appears in the First Book of Edward's reign, to the Commandments, which forms its second part; and then to the LORD'S Prayer, which is given at length; and both the commandments and the prayer are followed, as in our own Catechism, by an explanation, the former being summed up under the two heads of love to GOD and our neighbour. The 4th and 5th parts have nothing corresponding to them in our Catechism, the 4th being of the Word, the 5th of the Sacraments. The former is defined to be, the sacred Scriptures, the latter are external testimonies which figure spiritual grace and counter-sign the promises of GOD and confirm them.

To understand the ambiguous expressions in the explanation of the value of the Sacraments, in which the Catechism some-

times appears to deny any efficacy beyond that of testifying to grace already received and to the faith of the recipient, and sometimes to assert a kind of efficacy in increasing that faith, it is necessary to bear in mind the preceding part of the Catechism, where the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, is explained as meaning the society of the faithful whom GOD has predestined to life eternal, who are His elect, and whom accordingly He justifies and reforms to sanctity of life, whom by His secret election He has adopted unto salvation. For this reason no mention is made in the Creed of the punishment of hell as this does not apply to the elect, and hence the definition of true faith appears to be a certain and fixed knowledge of GOD'S fatherly goodwill towards ourselves. In describing the two Sacraments, Baptism is placed exactly on a level with Circumcision. In the "LORD'S Supper" we receive, it is said, the Communion of the Body of CHRIST, but no otherwise than we receive this in the Word of GOD, which is the Gospel.

Upon the whole, it may be described as Zwinglianism with a decent covering of a mantle of ambiguous expressions of piety. It is the same Catechism which may be seen in a French translation bound up with French Bibles for the use of the members of the French and Dutch Protestant Reformed Churches.

In the interval between the appearance of this document and that of the Consensus Tigurinus, or the "Consent of Zurich," which we shall next refer to, appeared the First Prayer Book of Edward VI., which came out in the spring of 1549.

And it is just this point which the learned Archbishop of Cashel has overlooked, and which destroys his whole argument for the Lutheran origin of the Article on Predestination. He says (Bampton Lectures, p. 221) that "when our Church was founded (and this we may presume is a slip of the pen for *reformed*) neither Calvin's name nor doctrines had acquired that importance to the Protestant world which both afterwards attained."

If he had meant this remark to apply to the Prayer Book of 1549, it would have been strictly true, for that book exhibits no trace either of Calvinism or Zwinglianism, founded, as it is, upon the existing Breviaries and Missals, the alterations in the Protestant sense being derived to a considerable extent from the "Consultatio" of Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne. There had been no necessity for any allusion to the Predestinarian controversy at Augsburg, for it can scarcely be said to have commenced; but at the time of the publication of the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI., this country was already disturbed by these theories, and the Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation, which were first suggested by Tyn-dale's translation of the New Testament, had, under the influence of Bradford, Philpot, and Hooper, spread far and wide. To show that certain of our Articles are derived from and are couched in nearly the same terms with certain others occurring in the Augsburg Confession, is nothing to the point, for upon these points, viz., the doctrine of the TRINITY, the denial of Roman doctrines, and the condemnation of the Anabaptists, there had been as yet no difference of opinion among Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Calvinists.

Whilst we are upon this subject, it may not be amiss to observe how prejudice may mislead one who has an hypothesis to maintain. In his Second Lecture, Archbishop Laurence observes that "the errors of the Church of Rome were almost the sole objects of religious altercation, no public dissension of consequence having occurred among Protestants, although thinking variously on various topics, except upon the single point of the Eucharist"! Had the author never heard of the Anabaptists who had been burned and drowned in Switzerland, and the Low Countries, and in England?

The chief characteristic of the Zurich Consent is the air of piety that is thrown over the whole document, which was drawn

up by Calvin himself, and the avoidance of very definite statements as to the doctrine of election and reprobation. In fact, with the exception of the first five of the twenty-six articles of which it consists, it is wholly taken up with a description of the Sacraments of "Baptism" and "The Supper of the LORD." The beginning of the Christian life is described as "an ingrafting into the body of CHRIST by faith, by which we are first considered righteous by an imputation of justice, and then are regenerated into a new life. To testify this new life in us the preaching of the Gospel and the use of the Sacraments is appointed, these latter being *badges or tokens of Christian men's profession* and compacts (*synggraphæ*), obliging us to a pious life, by which GOD represents and countersigns His grace given unto us before their reception. They signify to us nothing more than the written Word of GOD does, but they are lively images presented to our eyes for recalling the death of CHRIST and exercising our faith. By them those who have been already made partakers of CHRIST continue and renew that communion, as also they do in hearing the Word. They have no effect, except with the elect who are preordained to life, though the outward signs are administered also to the reprobate. In Baptism, as well as in the Supper, the benefit takes place beforehand. Paul's sins were washed away before his baptism, and Cornelius was gifted with the HOLY GHOST before his baptism, and CHRIST gives Himself to us in the Supper because He had given Himself before, and always abides in us. For all persons are ordered to prove themselves; consequently, faith is required of them beforehand, and is increased in the use of the Sacraments, and the regeneration which is promised in Baptism may, perhaps, only make its appearance in old age. Consequently, the Words of Institution in the Supper are figurative, and it is preposterous to take them in any literal sense, for CHRIST as man can be no where but in

■ The condemnation of the Lutheran view of Consub-

stantiation is equally emphatic with that of the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation.

Four years later, when the Lutherans had very strongly condemned these statements as making bare signs of the Sacraments, Calvin wrote an elaborate explanation of them, vindicating them from the charge, and showing that the expressions used implied that Sacraments were not mere testimonies, but that they were *instruments* by which GOD *efficaciously works* in His elect. He argues that he does not really differ from the Augsburg Confession ; and adds that the only obstacle to a true reception of the Sacrament is want of faith, and that the promises of GOD are not interfered with by the unworthiness of the ministers, whose intention is by no means a necessary part of the Sacrament. He also asserts that there is no ground for condemning his spiritual communication, as the Lutherans did, as unreal ; and he will not object to the saying that "the body of CHRIST is offered to us in the Bread, as it were, as a pledge."

It may be asked, what had the Zurich Consent to do with the changes of religion going on in England ? And the answer to this is, that it is not only important as a contemporary document from which the English Reformers might have copied, but that the Zurich divines were in constant communication on this as well as on other subjects, with Hooper, who was afterwards Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, and also with other divines at that time resident in England. Francis Dryander, who was Professor of Greek at Cambridge, wrote to Bullinger, March 25, before the appearance of the first Prayer Book in April, 1549, stating, upon hearsay, that the book contained some puerilities which had been suffered to remain for fear of offence being given by too sudden an innovation, but that these would shortly be amended. Three months later he regrets that the book spoke so obscurely on the LORD'S Supper. He is evidently entirely agreed with

Bullinger, whom he went to visit in the following winter, had, moreover, sent him a compendium in Latin of the Prayer Book ; and, in acknowledging this, Bullinger, in 1549, tells him, August 31, 1549, of the conference he and other Zurich ministers had held with Calvin, referring him to Hooper, to whom he says he had written fully upon all matters. They had come, he observes, to an exact understanding on the Sacramentarian Question, and sent the heads of the "Consent" to Hooper. The information he sent on the very same day to Utenhoeve, another divine of the same school, who had been present at Cambridge by Cranmer. And any one who will take the trouble to read Hooper's works and the answer to the Articles, published by Jolliffe and Johnson, at Antwerp, 1564, will find good reason to think that he had far more influence in the drawing up of the Forty-two Articles than is commonly supposed. It must be remembered, also, that there was not one Lutheran divine in England at this time. Cranmer had repeatedly invited Melancthon, and no doubt would have been glad of his moderate counsels, if, by any means, he could have prevented things going to extremities. But Melancthon was busy elsewhere ; and at the very time that the English and the Swiss divines were endeavouring to hurry on a decision of the Zwinglian sense of the Sacraments, the Lutherans in Germany were presenting their own newly-drawn Confession, commonly called the Wirtemberg Confession, to the Council assembled at Trent. It has been already said that the English Confession of Faith exhibits no further resemblance to the Augsburg Confession than all the professions put out by the Reformed Churches. That is to say, they are all based upon that, or, at least, upon the general principles on which the Augsburg rests. But the Augsburg Confession was far too moderate to satisfy either Luther or any of his adherents, except Melancthon and the few who sided with him. And in the Wirtem

Confession the Protestant party were far more outspoken than they had been twenty-two years before at Augsburg. And any one who reads through the "*Confessio Saxonicarum Ecclesiarum*," drawn up to be presented at Trent in 1551, will see how little it has in expression in common with our Articles.

In the Article on Original Sin this Confession contains a most deliberate condemnation of Calvinism—as follows :

It is most certain that the preaching of repentance extends to *all* men. The promise is universal, and offered to all, according to the passage, "GOD (Rom. xi.) hath included all under sin that He may have mercy upon all." Again, in the Fifth Article on Free Will, there is no resemblance to our Ninth Article. It also expressly speaks of men falling away from the faith, or otherwise sinning, in violation of conscience, losing the SPIRIT of GOD, and suffering eternal punishment if they die in that state ; an entirely different view of things from that intended in our Sixteenth Article, which was meant to imply that the elect might depart (*recedere*) from grace, but would rise again.

The difference of expression is the more remarkable because the English divines writing in 1552 could not but have seen this Protest which had been drawn up in the preceding year, and was already printed. The same remark applies to their Fourteenth Article on Baptism which speaks, in the most distinct language, of infants being by it received by GOD and sanctified, an entirely distinct view of the case from that of our Twenty-seventh Article, which attributes the *increase* of grace as due to the prayer which accompanies the rite, and of the rite itself, as being a visible countersigning of the promises of GOD and a confirmation of a faith which previously exists.

The doctrine of the other Sacrament is as different as possible from that propounded in our Article on the subject.

Sacraments are said to be "actions divinely appointed ; that the things themselves outside of their appointed use have not

the nature of a Sacrament, but that in their appointed use, in the act of Communion, CHRIST is truly and substantially present, and is truly presented to those who receive the Body and Blood of CHRIST." None are admitted to this Sacrament but those who, after a previous conference with their pastor, have been absolved. The Wirtemberg Confession professes to agree with that of Augsburg in all particulars ; and indeed it is a fair development of the meaning of the phrases and expressions used in it. It is impossible but what, if the object had been to reform our formularies after the model of the " *Confessio Augustana*," the Wirtemberg Articles would have been referred to. But there is not the slightest appearance in the Forty-two Articles of Edward's reign that the compilers had ever heard of this important document. Certainly, there is no expression made use of in our Articles which can in any way be traced to it, though we admit that, as regards points on which Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Calvinists were perfectly agreed, the English Reformers naturally followed the earliest authoritative document of Protestantism. The date at which the document was subscribed in the town of Wittenberg by Pomeranus, Melancthon, and others, is July 10, 1551 ; and it was afterwards assented to by the other Saxon ministers, the last assent which came in being of January 21, 1552.

But, as has been said, there were no Lutherans in England, the nearest approach to them being Bucer and Martyr. The latter had swerved from Lutheranism far more than the former, who, in writing from Cambridge, April 15th, 1550, apologises for certain expressions of Martyr's, which he thinks are susceptible of a good sense. Martyr had used the word *signification* for the mode in which the elements represent the Body and Blood of CHRIST ; but as he had added the epithet *efficacious*, Bucer professes to be satisfied, and notices with disapproval that the "Zurich people have here many and great followers." That is to say, Bucer was apprehensive of

what he did not live long enough to see carried out ; viz., the establishment of the Zwinglian as against the Lutheran hypothesis of the Eucharist. What that view was cannot be better expressed than in the words of Martin Faber, who, June 9, 1550, related to Buter what he had seen and heard on the occasion of a recent visit to the Archbishop at Lambeth, where he met À Lasco and Alexander, and quotes the following explanation of the Sacraments which À Lasco had written on the margin of a book containing a disputation between Calvin and Bullinger. The words are, that *nothing* is given to or conferred on any one by Sacraments ; but that they are only symbols of the thing previously given and received, for that GOD has from eternity elected His own by His Covenant, I am thy GOD, and that He afterwards confirms them by the symbols of Baptism and of the Holy Supper, to be His own and to have been previously His own. (Gorham's "Gleanings," p. 149.)

The death of Bucer, in 1551; left the ground clear for Peter Martyr to agree with À Lasco's views. In November, 1550, Martyr had signified his wish to Bucer that, according to À Lasco's desire, some consent might be arrived at on the Sacramentarian Question, adding that he himself could easily acquiesce in any compromise upon which Buter and À Lasco could hit. After Bucer's death, there was nothing to prevent the Zwinglio-Calvinistic school getting everything its own way, there being no divine remaining in England of any eminence who adopted the Lutheran view of Consubstantiation. Zwinglianism and Calvinism, however, as represented in the Consensus Tigurinus, was already in the ascendant in England, and may be said to have established itself by the middle of 1550, when the patent was granted (July 24) for the Dutch Church in Austin Friars. À Lasco, writing to Bullinger, says, that (January 7, 1551) they follow in that church the same doctrine on the Sacramentarian matter which was established between Bullinger and Calvin. A French

church with similar doctrines was set up at this time in Threadneedle Street, and another for Italians; and À Lasco fondly promised himself that he should get certain of the Saxon churches to adhere to his doctrine.

The patent granted to these people shows what the King and Somerset really intended. Opposition was expected on the part of the Bishops and others; but Cheke informed Peter Martyr that, if they would not make the changes in the Prayer Book which were considered necessary, the Royal authority would be interposed to force them to it. Martyr himself had for some time been gradually giving up all idea of the mysterious in the Eucharist, and incidentally let fall, in a letter written at this period, that he considered the repetition of the words of consecration, when the elements had been consumed, quite unnecessary for those who had once heard them, on the ground that the words of the Supper belong more to men than to bread and wine.

Bucer was the last survivor of those who could in any sense be classed with Lutherans. Cranmer wanted Brent, another Lutheran, to be summoned to supply his place, but desisted from applying to him at the dissuasion of À Lasco, who appears to have exercised a most remarkable influence over him at this time. At À Lasco's suggestion, he invited, in April, 1551, Wolfgang Musculus, who had been a Lutheran, but was now a Zwinglian, and Theodore Bibliander, who had succeeded Zwingli as Professor of Theology at Zurich, and Castalio, another of the same school. Neither of them could be spared; but, though there was a lack of Swiss divines, there was no want of Zwinglian and Calvinistic books, which were imported freely into England, where translations of many of them were published. Any one who will consult books of bibliography will see that there were absolutely no Lutheran books published in England at the end of Edward's reign. The Consensus Tigurinus had every thing its own way; and

when Cranmer (January, 15, 1551) informed Calvin that he could not do a greater service than frequently to write to the King (Gorham, p. 267) it is plain that the Archbishop, whether from policy or conviction, had fallen in with the stream. And the only thing he was successful in preventing, which looked against the Zwinglian view, was the posture of the recipient at the Celebration. He urged that innovations on this point were too late, because the kneeling posture had already received the sanction of Parliament. Hopes, indeed, had never been entirely given up of uniting Protestants in one body ; and before the appearance of the Second Prayer Book, Calvin had written to Cranmer on this subject, assenting to the idea, under the present hopeless aspect of affairs, that England should do what she could by herself. Calvin acknowledges that much had been done by the First Prayer Book, but asserts that much also remained to be done. (Gorham, p. 278.)

This is the celebrated letter in which the English bishops are called horned beasts, and in which the writer will not positively say that people ought not to pray for the Pope, but thinks that such persons must have a good deal of spare time on their hands ; and in which occurs also the remarkable argument that the Blessed Virgin ought not to be called the Mother of GOD ; for if so, we might as well speak of the Blood of GOD. It is curious that Calvin's wonderful knowledge of Scripture should have failed him here, as this is the exact expression of one passage in Holy Writ (Acts xx. 28).

The development of this Consensus Tigurinus in Switzerland was most consistent. Bullinger is the great representative of Swiss opinion after the death of Zwingli. Without any of the philosophical acuteness of Zwingli, he inherited a good deal of his rationalising spirit. Yet, though he constantly denies that Sacraments confer grace, even he calls them efficacious signs of grace. And no more is meant by this expression in our

Article than was intended by Bullinger, who, albeit he professes some indignation at the charge of reducing Sacraments to mere external signs, wrote more than one treatise, the professed purpose of which was to prove that Sacraments do not give grace, neither have grace included in them, but that they are exactly on a par with the sacraments of the Jewish dispensation.

The real efficacy which Bullinger, as the representative of the whole school of Zwinglianism, attributed to them, in common with our own Reformers, is perhaps best exhibited in the following passage from his fifth decade on the Sacraments: "Yea, Sacraments were instituted by GOD to that end that they might visibly confirm unto us the ready good will of GOD towards us, and also the preaching of the Gospel, and all the promises of life and salvation ; and that they should be, as it were, seals set and fixed to the Gospel and promises made by GOD, which might testify and confirm that faith in CHRIST is true righteousness. There is all one ground of the Sacraments of the Old Testament and of the New, a few things only excepted." (p. 317.) Further on, quoting Zwingli, he says, "Sacraments bear witness of a thing that has been done." Again, "They which before by grace invisibly are received of GOD into the society of GOD, these self-same are visibly now, by Baptism, admitted into the self-same household of GOD by the ministers of GOD." "Sacraments stir up and help the faith of the godly." "Sacraments do visibly graff us into the fellowship of CHRIST and His Saints who were invisibly grafted by His grace before we were partakers of the Sacraments; but by receiving of the Sacraments we do now open and make manifest of Whose Body we should be and are members." "Sacraments put us in mind of our duty."

One or two short sentences may be added as abundantly confirming this view. First, of Baptism : "Since young babes and infants of the faithful are in the number of GOD'S people

and partakers of the promise, it follows of necessity that they are to be baptized."

Next, Of CHRIST'S presence in the Eucharist (p. 452): "I confess and acknowledge, with open mouth and sincere heart, that spiritual, divine, and quickening presence of our LORD CHRIST, both in the Supper and also out of the Supper, whereby He continueth to pour Himself into us, not by signs lacking life, but by His HOLY SPIRIT, to make us partakers of all His good graces, to justify, quicken, nourish, sustain, and satisfy us; which presence we do also feel in ourselves through faith, by the which we are both sustained, nourished, and satisfied."

The whole document explains to us in the most emphatic manner what was the meaning of the Swiss Reformers when they used the expression "sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace." They placed the Sacraments exactly on the same footing as the ministry of the Word of GOD. They were the means, just as the reading of the Bible and the hearing of the Word of GOD preached were means, of increasing the faith of those who were elect and predestined to eternal life. The Zwinglio-Calvinistic theory is quite intelligible and more consistent than the Lutheran, in that it accounts for the beginnings of faith, by the arbitrary will of GOD selecting from eternity those who were to be saved. Little had yet been said about the reprobation from all eternity of the non-elect.

In 1549, Calvin was content to drop out of sight any miraculous element in the LORD'S Supper to accommodate himself to the rationalism of the Zwinglian party. It was not till 1557, many years afterwards, that with the view of conciliating the Lutherans, the Calvinists consented not only to throw overboard the figurative meaning and adopt the expressions of the Augsburg Confession, agreeing with the Lutherans to condemn the "diabolical" doctrine of Transubstantiation. They also at this time professed their belief in the necessity of Baptism

the uncertainty of predestination, and acknowledged prayers for the dead, exactly after the Confession of the Augsburg Confession. These apparent shiftings of ground in the Calvinistic theory in 1557, and again afterwards in the conference at Poissy in 1561, were however only temporary expedients which did not interfere with the natural development of Calvinism, as it appears in the Five Points agreed to in the synod of Dort.

This explanation of Calvin's belongs to a later date, and certainly could not in any way have affected the Forty-two Articles, which belong to the year 1552. There had indeed appeared at Geneva on the 1st of January, 1552, a long explication on the subject of the everlasting predestination of GOD, entitled "*Consensus Genevensis*." It had been drawn up by Calvin, and vindicates his assertions on the subject of election and reprobation with most startling clearness, making out a most favourable case from texts of Scripture, but not attempting to go into the philosophy of the subject. But it is plain the document had no effect upon the compilation of the Forty-two Articles of the same year, however much it may have influenced the minds of those who put together the Thirty-nine Articles in 1563, and succeeded in imposing them in 1571. Any one who will compare the original Articles of Edward's reign with the Augsburg Confession and the documents produced by the Swiss Churches, will easily see that the English Articles are not descended from the moderate Articles drawn up by Melancthon and presented to the Emperor at Augsburg in June, 1530, in any other sense than that all the documents produced by Protestants of all kinds have a common origin in the idea of justification by faith and the appeal to Scripture interpreted by each for himself; but that wherever there is a divergence in any of the above Confessions, England was a follower in the track of the teaching of the Swiss Churches. Zwinglianism, properly so called, became extinct by the death of Zwingli at the battle of

Cappel in 1531, and his heresy soon merged in Calvinism. Before however Calvinism had had time to develop—during the interval between the death of Zwingli and the establishment of Calvin's supremacy over the Church of Geneva—the English Articles were composed almost entirely under the influence of Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, which exerted itself through the means of Bucer, Martyr, and À Lasco. They are the exact representatives of the Zurich Consent of 1549, a period at which the Genevan Church was not able to stand alone without the help of Berne, Zurich, and the other Protestant Cantons of Switzerland.

Accordingly, the foreign Reformed Churches, as they are called, have always, and with some appearance of justice, claimed the English Church as fraternizing with them. Neither can there be the least doubt but that at any time after the accession of Elizabeth down to the end of the reign of James I., English divinity was upon the whole Calvinistic, and English divines would have classed themselves rather with the followers of Calvin than of Luther. We say advisedly, to the end of the reign of James I., for Laud's influence was only beginning to be felt during the last two or three years of that reign; and the culminating point of Calvinism in the Church of England must be placed at the date of May 6, 1619, when George Carleton, Bishop of Llandaff, John Davenant, Margaret Professor of Theology at Cambridge and afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, Samuel Ward, afterwards Margaret Professor, Thomas Good, Precentor of S. Paul's, and Walter Balcanqual, a Scotchman, intended to represent the Scottish Church, subscribed the Eighteen Articles of the Synod of Dort, and the Nine Articles, anathematizing those of a contrary opinion to the Calvinists. Twenty different Churches were represented at this assembly. Fortunately the English representatives had no power to commit the Church to the opinions which they subscribed.

Here, for the present, this first part of the subject must be concluded. It will be resumed in another Tract shortly to be published, in which it is hoped that after concluding the present argument other cogent reasons for the abolition of the subscription of the clergy to the Thirty-nine Articles, and their removal from the position which they now hold in the system of the Church of England, will be presented. The writer earnestly hopes that what he has already alleged, and what he shall hereafter have occasion to allege, in reference to this point, will receive the attentive consideration of Churchmen of all schools. It would be easy to raise a cry against any such proposition, which perhaps might enlist the popular mind on its side. He trusts that he shall be met with fair argument, and not with the senseless repetition of the charge of abandoning the so-called "principles of the Reformation." Any one who means to take up this ground had better begin by defining clearly both for himself and his hearers what "the principles of the Reformation" are ; and then compare them with the principles of the Book of Common Prayer as finally settled by the divines of the period of the Restoration in 1662.

NICHOLAS POCOCK.

Studies in Modern Problems.

THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

OF all mixed questions, social and religious, Marriage is one of the most important. Partly divine, partly human, it has equal bearing on the divine and human societies. In one sense it may be said to lie at the foundation of both. Divine in its origination, in its primary laws, in its analogies, in its ultimate object, it is human in its application, in its accidents—above all, in its corruption. Conformed to the tripartite nature of man, it bears a close relation to every part of it, the bodily, the intellectual, the spiritual. Every part of that nature being hallowed by its assumption into the GOD-HEAD, marriage partakes of that sanctification (of which, indeed, it is something more than a mere figure), and is holy in all its aspects. Firmly interwoven with some of the deepest problems of man's existence in relation to both this world and the world to come, its corruption or abuse cannot but bring with it detriment to his whole nature ; it may bring deadly detriment. It cannot fail in some measure to lower and unspiritualize the individual and to degrade society ; it may bring ruin on both.

For these reasons, it will always be a matter of the gravest importance when questions relating to marriage become unsettled, and public opinion leans towards organic change. For such change, whether it be for evil or for good, can never be a trivial thing. If it be for good, it is not only a good in itself, but an evidence of the general prevalence of a higher tone of morality in the community. If for evil, it not only is

a direct harm, but bears witness to a relatively lowered national morality, to a wide-spread deterioration of society below, if not upon, the surface, of which the immediate modification of the law may be a very inadequate, though it must be a significant test. For in moral changes, as in others, nothing is done at once. It may be, indeed, that the persistent and interested efforts of comparatively few may win concessions from an unsympathizing, perhaps even a half-inimical, majority; but this cannot be unless that majority be either ill-informed or indolent. And these conditions evidence previous neglect or indifference: and where these are there must be decay and retrogression. Public opinion must have ceased to care before it will allow itself to be overborne by noise or pertinacity. Moreover, in these matters beyond most others, the worst will not come to the surface. When men dare to do or say openly a little, we may be sure they dare to think and speak, and even do, in secret much more. I do not, of course, mean that in every case the open advocacy of low morality necessarily proves the practice of secret immorality. But when such advocacy meets with any considerable amount of popular favour, it indicates the presence below the surface of society of a wide-spread leaven of still worse evils, as surely as the first turning leaves of autumn indicate a general decline of the vital energy of vegetation. A more formidable symptom it is not easy to imagine, particularly as it seldom, if ever, appears alone.

Now, undoubtedly, these symptoms have of late years appeared in our own country in greater force than formerly, and it is most important that the attention of good Christians should be more particularly drawn to them, that for the sake of both society and religion they may be stirred up to give them a more uncompromising opposition. Marriage is being made the object of virulent attacks, philosophical and scientific, as well as brutal and gross attacks, directed against its

inherent sanctity as a divine ordinance, with a view to reducing it to the level of a merely social convenience, the outgrowth, as some would have it, of a gradually evolving intelligence regulating the animal instincts and civilizing the slowly developing mammalian, through the influence of sexual selection. All reference to a divine law, and still more to a divine antitype, is wholly ignored. A standard of a supposed expediency takes the place of right ; and the barrier-limits raised by GOD being thrown down, nothing remains (unless they are re-erected) to stem the rising tide of license which threatens eventually to sweep away not only all principles of godly purity, but almost all practice of social decency and order.

It may seem that little has yet been effected in this direction, and that there is no great fear of more, so that it is but a vain alarm, exciting apprehensions vague and groundless, to insist on this as a cause of serious anxiety. It may be so. It is a far pleasanter view to take, be it false or true. But the worst of it is, that facts do not bear out this view.

There is the great fact that, in our own generation, we have seen the law altered in the interests of immorality ; and this alone, as I have said, is a painfully significant index of the general tendency of the public mind. And it will scarcely be supposed that since that time higher, purer, more sacred views of marriage have widely prevailed, otherwise we must have seen some efforts for the repeal of that evil legislation ; while in regard to social and private life it is, at the least, exceedingly questionable whether true Christian morality is not on the decline.

The only safe way to judge of this question is to set up the old Christian standard of marriage, and by it to test the enactments of English law and the tendencies of popular feeling. Some standard we must have in this as in all other moral questions, and the Christian standard is not merely the

only safe one for Christians, but, as will be shown in part as we proceed, the only one definite and fixed.

What, then, is the Christian idea of marriage? As gathered from the Holy Scriptures and the teaching of the Church, it is a sacred and mysterious ordinance of GOD, whereby two persons are indissolubly bound together until death, for the discharge of mutual duties and functions closely connected with this world and the world to come. It is the figure and the earthly representation of the Incarnation of our LORD GOD, bearing an exceedingly close analogy to that Divine Mystery in both its nature and its laws: so much so, that in many difficult moral questions relating to marriage, the true key will be most readily and securely found in the laws of the Incarnation. It is ordained to be the foundation of the human, and of the extension of the supernatural society, because through it GOD wills to be perpetually creating those predestined to be the members of His SON's mystical body; and thus it is a designed means of fulfilling the great purpose for which GOD was made MAN. The true marriage covenant is the earthly analogue of the covenant between GOD and humanity, and enshrines in a wonderful but most practical manner the image of the mutual obligations of that marvelous grace.

Elsewhere (in the 2nd Series of "The Church and the World," 1867, Essay "Sacrament of Marriage,") I have endeavoured to investigate the nature and importance of these relations more fully, and (so to say) more scientifically, than it is possible to do here, the object of the present paper being a practical, not a theological treatment of the subject. It must suffice on this occasion to enumerate, without argumentative proof, a few of the points in which the character of Holy Matrimony is elucidated and determined by the yet holier and diviner mystery.

It is an ordinance founded on the principle of duality in

unity, as "GOD and Man are One CHRIST." It is a union of the whole being, not of the body only; as "he that is joined to the LORD is one spirit" as well as a "member of His body;" and as the Incarnation is the union of whole GOD-HEAD with whole Manhood. It is indissoluble, as the Hypostatic Union is never to be divided. It is a union of two only (as against polygamy or polyandry) as there are but two natures in the Hypostatic Union, and as GOD says of the Bride (whether humanity in the abstract, or the regenerate humanity which, individually and still more collectively, is the "Extension of the Incarnation"), "My love, My undefiled is but One." Thus "every man" is to have "his own wife," and "every woman her own husband." It is a sacred covenant on the one side of perfect love, and a gift of equal participation in all honour and goods, as the LORD'S Humanity is glorified "with the glory which" He "had with" the FATHER "before the world was"; and as the members of His body shall "sit with" Him "in" His "throne even as" He is "set down with" His "FATHER in His throne:" and as "CHRIST loved the Church and gave Himself for it." On the other side is a loving subjection, for "the head of the woman is the man," as "the head of every man is CHRIST," *the* Man, the GOD-MAN; and "the Head of CHRIST is GOD," the Essential GODHEAD the Head of the Humanity even of GOD. These are enough for the present.

Among these characteristics the indissolubility of marriage is one of the most fundamental. Its normal type is the Hypostatic Union itself, and it presents a perfect parallel to the "extended Incarnation" in every regenerate man. "Till death us do part." In the Hypostatic Union death has no place; therefore that marriage is absolutely indissoluble for evermore. In the regenerate it is dissoluble, but only by eternal death. Other divorce *a vinculo* there is none. There is divorce, a "putting away" on one side or the other, when

the Christian is cast out "as a heathen man," or when he goes away into a voluntary and open apostacy. But the *vinculum matrimonii*, the bond of the spiritual marriage, remains ; for even the apostate can be reconciled by penance without a new baptism.

To treat marriage as dissoluble is not only to undermine its sanctity, but to subvert its essential law. It goes far towards virtually abolishing it altogether, and substituting a mode of union other than that ordained by GOD. Its immediate evil is vast ; its potential evil almost incalculable. Yet this desperate and well-nigh fatal error has been already effected among us by the action of the Divorce Law, which permits those legally divorced to enter into other legal unions, as though the former husband or wife were dead, This legalizing adultery is a wilful departure from the Christian rule, and is perceived by able and acute men to be but "the beginning of sorrows." Mr. Lecky, in his "History of European Morals," says : "The stringency of the Catholic doctrine, which forbids the dissolution of marriage even in the case of adultery, has been considerably relaxed by modern legislation, and there can, I think, be little doubt that further steps will yet be taken in the same direction" (vol. ii. p. 374).

What those "further steps" may be he does not intimate, but it is not very difficult to imagine. At all events, the "further steps" must be in the direction of facilitating divorce on lighter and lighter grounds, as is already the case on the Continent. Having departed from the divine rule, there is no other guide but human reason, human passion, or human expediency. The divine rule is "one wife at a time, and that wife till death." One only reason for "putting away" ; for dissolution, not one.

The doctrine of dissolubility for adultery has its root, I imagine, in an imperfect realization of the nature of the

marriage union. It is not a union of body only, but of the whole being. Therefore, could carnal sin, potentially or actually, dissolve the one part, it would not follow that it could dissolve the whole union. Yet anything short of this would not dissolve the marriage. It is, indeed, argued by the more religious advocates of divorce that sin of this kind does dissolve the bond, and they allege the Apostle's words: "Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh" (1 Cor. vi. 16), as if union with another abrogated the marriage union. But this is not true. It regards only a part, and that not the highest part, of the marriage oneness. Were it true, it would logically result in this—that the bodily union *is* marriage. And strange indeed would be the effect of such a theory. Held in combination with monogamistic principles, it would lead to the virtual abolition of the sins of adultery and fornication, reducing them to acts of either original marriage, or of transference of marriage from partner to partner. Held, again, in combination with the belief in the indissolubility of marriage once formed, its logical result is polygamy.

This is no fictitious hypothesis. These views, in their substance, have been gravely and ardently advocated in England as long ago as the beginning of the present century. The following extracts will speak for themselves: "The validity of the divine ordinance of marriage consists in the union of the male and female, where mutual and previous consent must be presumed. The Supreme Judge in this situation has pronounced His sentence—*they shall be one flesh*, and is therefore said to *join them together*. Whether betrothment, espousals, or promises can be proved or not, or even whether they were made or not, can make no difference, for *personal connexion is marriage*, and anything more is ceremony, decency, and prudence." . . . "To *put asunder* those whom the ordinance of the Most High *hath joined* cannot be endured

by a religious people. The fact to be ascertained is, has there been a marriage in the sight of GOD? If there has, His laws must be *publicly recognised* if we intend to duly honour Him." . . . "CHRIST, as Head of the Church—the great body of true believers—is one with the Church; but *this oneness* does not hinder Him from being one *with every individual member*. So neither does a single marriage prevent the man from being *one flesh* with another woman." . . . "It was, is, and ever will be, the *positive law* of heaven, founded on the security of the female kind, that if *any man* takes possession of the person of a virgin—he *shall not put her away*. This must include the married man, otherwise the plan would be incomplete and not efficacious to all the good purposes of it." . . . "Although the first pattern of marriage bears the form of monogamy, which form, generally speaking, appears to be the intention of GOD and nature; yet there are exceptions, and those *excepted cases* must be taken to be a part of the heavenly plan for the welfare of the most noble part of the creation. . . . What is the best form of marriage is an unsettled point among the learned. . . . but in hot climates . . . polygamy is a wise institution. And it may not be altogether improper in the colder regions of the north, places far removed from tropical heats, and tropical effeminacy, by the introduction of foreign luxuries and foreign manners bringing similar propensities." ("On Marriage, as a Divine Ordinance and a Human Institution." By the late Mayor of Petersfield. Winchester, 1812, pp. 6—44 *passim*.)

The anonymous and ex-Mayor of Petersfield was surely a conceited man. Still, in his way, he had a regard for GOD's laws, only he started from false principles and trusted to reason and policy in working them out. Hence the strange and scandalous conclusions at which he arrived. He was also inconsistent. For while he allowed in certain circumstances (under cover of the Old Testament civil code, which he con-

sidered part of the moral law for these cases) a restricted polygamy to the man, he altogether denied like liberty to the woman; and in fact must on his own principles have punished her adultery with death. His treatise is mainly of value as showing to what lengths of desecration of holy matrimony a man may run on the plea of religion and morality, when once he has receded from the Gospel rule. Yet it is also a warning against that exaggeration of the external and physical aspect of marriage which, as has been said, probably lies at the root of the belief in its dissolubility (if not its actual dissolution) by adultery. "He that is joined to the LORD is one spirit." There is the key to the antidote.¹ For it must not be forgotten that the first and foremost end of marriage was *not* "procreation of children," still less a "remedy against fornication," but "mutual society, help, and comfort." "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him." "The body was created for the LORD and the LORD for the body."

Yet there is equal danger from an opposite quarter, as there always must be where we do not hold to the perfect analogy of the faith, and it is a danger which the divorce law has enormously increased. That law has pronounced marriage dissoluble, and (as Lecky says) "there can be little doubt that further steps will yet be taken in the same direction." For as soon as it is recognised (as it will be) that external union is not the essence or even the main end of marriage, it will be impossible to deny with any shadow of consistency (appeal to the divine law having been already

¹ Indeed, to say the truth, I for one do not believe that "consummation" is of the essence of marriage at all, as regards its indissolubility. A wife is a *wife* when she leaves the altar, though she should never see her husband again. They are one, though not as perfectly as they may be afterwards. Here again the higher mystery may elucidate the lower. The baptised child is a member of CHRIST past severance, save by eternal death; but the communicant only is the *telios*, the "perfected," "consummated" Christian.

surrendered) that other and yet graver reasons for dissolution may exist. An original choice not really free, a hopeless uncongeniality in temper and disposition, alienation of affection, insanity, vicious habits, as drunkenness or cruelty—these and other pleas may be speciously urged with a power which it will be found difficult or impossible to resist. Appeal to a divine prohibition will be barred, for this has been already appealed to in vain against any divorce *a vinculo*, and especially against the “re-marriage” of the adulteress. “Consistency,” said Dr. Pusey nearly twenty-five years ago, “in good or evil is the increasing character of the age” (“Marriage with Deceased Wife’s Sister,” preface, p. xxx.); and every year confirms it. We had rather, as a nation, sin consistently than repent inconsistently. Every fresh concession gained from our indifference is immediately, when the time comes, turned against us as a demand for consistency. “What a trifle,” say they, “when it has to be won;” “You are already pledged to the principle,” say they again, when it has been won. And the taunt is irresistible.

Not to speak of the laws and customs of other countries which will be, and are, claimed as precedents, now that we have already made the first step in concession, the advocacy of increased laxity in divorce is spreading among ourselves, and is favoured by some of those who are called leaders of thought, though they speak for the most part with much reserve. Such, for example, I take to be the true drift of the following passage in Lecky’s “European Morals,” since the writer cannot be credited with any special regard for the sacramental character and mystical aspects of marriage: “I do not propose in the present work to examine how far this total prohibition [of divorce] has been for the happiness or the moral well-being of men. I will simply observe that though it is now often defended, it was not originally imposed on Christian nations upon utilitarian grounds, but was based

upon the sacramental character of marriage, upon the belief that it was the special symbol of the perpetual union of CHRIST with His Church, and upon a well-known passage in the Gospels" (vol. ii. p. 373). And then follow the words already quoted. Again: "Partly by raising marriage into a sacrament, and partly by representing it as, in some mysterious and not very definable sense, an image of the union of CHRIST with His Church, a feeling was fostered that a life-long union of one man and one woman is, under all circumstances, the single form of intercourse between the sexes which is not illegitimate, and this conviction has acquired the force of a primal moral intuition. There can, I think, be little doubt that, in the stringency with which it is usually laid down, it rests not upon the law of nature, but upon positive law, although unassisted nature is able to lead men many steps in its direction" (vol. ii. pp. 367, 368). Then after referring to some of these he continues: "In these [natural] considerations we have ample grounds for maintaining that the life-long union of one man and of one woman should be the normal and dominant type of intercourse between the sexes. We can prove that it is on the whole most conducive to the happiness and also to the moral elevation of all parties. But beyond this point it would, I conceive, be impossible to advance, except by the assistance of a special revelation. It by no means follows that because this should be the dominant type it should be the only one, or that the interests of society demand that all connexions should be forced into the same die" (p. 369). Other passages in the same work appear to intimate that in certain states of society a limited facility of divorce would on the whole be beneficial rather than the reverse to public morals.

The late J. S. Mill, however, goes to much greater lengths. He, denouncing in violent terms the whole existing system of matrimonial relations, says, that perfect freedom of divorce

and re-marriage is the least, and that an insufficient, compensation which (as matters now stand) the woman ought to receive. "Surely, if a woman is denied any lot in life but that of being the personal body-servant of a despot, and is dependent for everything upon the chance of finding one who may be disposed to make a favourite of her instead of merely a drudge, it is a very cruel aggravation of her fate that she should be allowed to try this chance only once. The natural sequel and corollary from this state of things would be, that since her all in life depends upon obtaining a good master, she should be allowed to change again and again until she finds one. I am not saying," he cautiously continues, "that she ought to be allowed this privilege. That is a totally different consideration. The question of divorce, in the sense involving liberty of re-marriage, is one into which it is foreign to my purpose to enter. All I now say is that to those to whom nothing but servitude is allowed, the free choice of servitude is the only, though a most insufficient, alleviation. Its refusal completes the assimilation of the wife to the slave, and the slave under not the mildest form of slavery." ("Subjection of Women," p. 59.)

On the "servitude" question more will be said further on. Here it need only be observed that such extravagant phantasies recklessly thrown out by a man of intellectual power and great popularity with all agitators for general social change cannot but exercise a most pernicious and extended influence. How greedily they are seized and improved on by the (morally) lowest of the low I shall presently venture slightly to indicate.

Nevertheless it may, perhaps, be thought that whatever rationalists or unbelievers may desire, religious public opinion in this country will instinctively discard all pleas for relaxing further the marriage bond. But we have no right to assume any such thing. If the plain commands of the Bible are re-

jected there is little indeed in the spirit of Protestantism that can oppose an effectual barrier to self-indulgence. All know how in the sixteenth century the leaders of German Protestantism found semi-pious excuses for a certain polygamous union in high life. Why should it be more difficult to excuse the rejection than the co-retention of the first wife? Let us hear the case pleaded on religious grounds in our own country a century later by an anonymous writer, in the palmy days of Protestant ascendancy: "Indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, arising from a cause in nature unchangeable, hindering and ever likely to hinder the main benefits of conjugal society, which are solace and peace, is a greater reason of divorce than natural frigidity, especially if there be no children and that there be mutual consent. This I gather from Deut. xxiv. 1." Interpreting this of mental no less than of bodily "nakedness of ought," he proceeds to argue: "What greater nakedness or unfitness of mind than that which hinders ever the solace and peaceful society of the married couple, and what hinders that more than the unfitness and defectiveness of an unconjugal mind? The cause, therefore, of divorce expressed in the position cannot but agree with that described in the best and equallest sense of Moses' law. Which being a matter of pure charity is plainly moral, and now more in force than ever, therefore surely lawful. For if under the law such was GOD'S gracious indulgence, as not to suffer the ordinance of His goodness and favour through any error to be stigmatized upon His servants to their misery and thralldom, much less will He suffer it now under the covenant of Grace, by abrogating His former grant of remedy and relief." ("The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce restored to the good of both sexes." By J. M. 1645. Dedicated to the Parliament of England with the Assembly, pp. 6, 7.) The scriptural difficulties he lightly esteems, or skips over in a spirit worthy of "Trusty Tomkins" in Woodstock. Quoting with approba-

tion the words of Fagius, he says: "The law of GOD permitted divorce for the help of human weakness. For everyone that of necessity separates cannot live single. That CHRIST denied divorce to His own, hinders not. For what is that to the unregenerate who hath not attained such perfection? Let not the remedy be despised which was given to weakness. And when CHRIST saith, 'Who marries the divorced commits adultery,' it is to be understood, if he had any plot in the divorce" (p. 6.)

So pertinent to the present purpose is this curious essay on Divorce that I am tempted to extract a few more significant sentences. Thus: "It is less a breach of wedlock to part with wise and quiet consent betimes than still to soil and profane that mystery of joy and union with a polluting sadness and perpetual distemper, for it is not the outward continency of marriage that keeps whole that covenant, but whatsoever (*sic*) does most according to peace and love, whether in marriage or in divorce, he it is that breaks marriage least, it being so often written that love only is the fulfilling of every commandment" (p. 16.) . . . "If the true definition of a wife were asked in good earnest, this clause 'being a meet help' would show itself so necessary and so essential in that demonstrative argument that it might be logically concluded, therefore she who naturally and perpetually is no meet help can be no wife, which clearly takes away the difficulty of dismissing such a one" (pp. 49, 50) Doubtless! but then, what was their position while they lived together, nominally but not really married? How can any one tell for years, perhaps for ever, whether he is really married or not? For as the writer says: "Neither can it be said properly that such twain were ever divorced, but only parted from each other as two persons unconjunctive and unmarriageable together" (p. 63.) With a superb confidence in his own moral and religious intuitions he pronounces judgment

in two remarkable passages: "I shall not much waver to affirm that those words which are made to intimate as if they forbade all divorce but for adultery—those words taken circumscriptly, without regard to any precedent law of Moses or attestation of CHRIST Himself, or without care to preserve those His fundamental and superior laws of nature and charity, to which all other ordinances give up their seal, are as much against plain equity and the mercy of religion as those words of 'Take, eat, this is My Body,' elementally understood, are against nature and sense" (p. 61). "Let whoso will now listen: I want neither pall nor mitre; I stay neither for ordination or induction, but in the firm faith of a knowing Christian, which is the best and truest endowment of the keys, I pronounce the man who shall bind so cruelly a gracious ordinance of GOD hath not in that the spirit of CHRIST" (p. 32).

It is evident that such a theory logically carried out might lead to the most terrible sins of cruelty, cold-blooded selfishness, and licentiousness. It has been already said that a too exclusive regard to the inner union of marriage may be as dangerous an error as its opposite. In fact, it may be worse; because more arbitrary in its operation, more intangible in its grounds. Any pretext that can be made to assume the shape of uncongeniality or unsuitableness of disposition may be exaggerated into a legitimate reason for divorce, e. g., mere fickleness or lightness of fancy, or satiety, or unholy hankering after change. There is no resting-place till we descend to the point where, with Paulus Æmilius, it will be enough to say, "None but myself knows where the shoe pinches." If a Napoleon may cast away his wife because she bears no children, why not John Smith, who needs a son, not indeed to succeed to his throne, but to cherish his old age? GOD is no respecter of persons, nor has He made one law for the emperor, another for the rustic. Were it needful, it would be

easy to draw up a table of degrees joining the extreme points, each with an undeniable claim to "relief," if the one before be allowed. And if sterility be a misery in many cases, the opposite excess is yet a greater one in many more. The man over-burdened with a rapidly-multiplying family will put in his plea too. He groans daily through a superfluity of that for the want of which his neighbour is, it may be, fretting away his life. What more natural, what more expedient, than that they should exchange by process of lawful divorce and remarriage?

Let no one imagine this to be a supposition too monstrous to be hypothesized. I am writing well within my data; and those who have had occasion to follow out the development of these theories, as now advocated far and wide, will *know* that "the depths of Satan as they speak" go far below the villany of such a suggestion as this.

We have seen that both the advocate of modified polygamy and the advocate of easy divorce rest their arguments in great measure on Scripture—but the Scripture of the Old Testament; for their references to the New are nothing better than desperate quibbles and daring evasions. Both partake of one fundamental error; both equally fail to see that from the Fall till the Incarnation (at all events throughout the whole patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations) the law of marriage was in a provisional and tolerated condition of great imperfection. It laboured under the incubus of a hardness of heart and inability on the part of the subjects of those dispensations to receive the full and perfect law, as it was given "at the beginning." Not till our LORD became Incarnate did the cloud roll away, and, in the divine light of that Archetypal Marriage, the true law of Holy Matrimony become for ever clear and fixed and unchangeable. The moral law truly remained underlying all—as we learn from the denunciations pronounced against the heathen for its violation; but till the

time of the "regeneration" the incrustations of ages were not cleared away.

"A life-long union of one man and one woman:" such, as Mr. Lecky truly observes, is the Christian and Catholic idea of marriage. Reject this idea, and no one can say where we can stop. Once make the bond of marriage dissoluble, and the only question will be how much or how little shall be reckoned a sufficient ground of divorce. Religion does not answer; it is reduced to a question of custom or expediency, or social or individual good, as variously estimated by the fluctuations of popular opinion. It needs no prophet to foresee that the tendency will be ever towards greater laxity, till divorce may be as ordinary a process as marriage, and well-nigh as common. To what a pass had Roman civilisation and luxury brought the empire when the Christian Tertullian could say that "divorce was, as it were, the fruit of marriage" (Apologet. Adv. Gentes, c. vi. p. 19), and the heathen Seneca (we think) that people "married only that they might be capable of divorce, and were divorced only that they might be capable of marriage." It is not, of course, implied that we ever shall come to this state in England; but, having already surrendered the only impregnable bulwark, the extent of our fall must henceforth depend on the violence and opportuneness of the attack rather than on our remaining means of resistance; that is to say, if we elect to be "consistent" as usual.

And another consideration must not be overlooked. There is no doubt that the addition of religious sanctions tends materially to strengthen the sanctity of even civil marriages, and so far to guard them from desecration. The Royal Commissioners appointed a few years ago to investigate and report on the Marriage Laws of the United Kingdom were alive to the value of such sanctions even from a civil point of view. "We entirely concur (they say) in the opinion of the late Bishop of Derry, who considered it both the wisdom and the

duty of the State to associate its legislation on this subject with the religious habits and sentiments of the people, and to obtain, as far as possible, the religious sanction for the marriage contract." ("Report," p. xxv.) Again : "On the continent of Europe, wherever the Code Civil is in force, a complete separation is made in marriage between the civil contract and the religious ceremony ; and a contract passed before a purely civil officer is in all cases required. We do not recommend the introduction of this system into the United Kingdom. That it might in some respects have advantages we do not deny ; but . . . it would be inconsistent with the principle (to which we attach great value) of strengthening and consecrating the civil tie, as far as possible, by the sanctions of religion." (Ibid. pp. xxxiv., xxxv.)

Yet that this is the drift of things can hardly be doubted. The Royal Commissioners themselves advise that any religious ceremony should remain, as it is at present, purely optional, while the existing divorce laws, sanctioning and maintaining, as they do in some degree, the profanation of the Church's holy rites, are in themselves almost enough to provoke, and certainly to invite, a demand for the application of the Civil Code to our own country. If the State really values the addition of the religious to the civil sanction, it ought, at least, to take care that it be sought consistently with the doctrines of the Church, by which "about seven-ninths of the whole number of marriages in England are still solemnised." ("Report," p. vi.) As is well known, every English priest is now compelled by law to allow any clergyman (who can be induced so far to degrade himself and his office) to celebrate in his Church, with her sacred rites, certain adulterous connections which he may himself refuse to recognise. Any further relaxation of the marriage laws would probably lead either to open war between Church and State, or a speedy legal recognition of marriage as an exclusively civil contract.

And this would not only mark a further decline in public morals, but help to prepare the way for a more general licence in living. So it was in Rome ; so would it only too probably be in England. As Mr. Lecky says: "Another and still more important consequence resulted from the changed form of marriage. Being looked upon simply as a civil contract, entered into for the happiness of the contracting parties, its continuance depended upon mutual consent. Either party might dissolve it at will, and the dissolution gave both parties a right to remarry. There can be no question that under this system the obligations of marriage were treated with extreme levity." ("European Morals," vol. ii. p. 324.)

The greater the facility of divorce the nearer we approach to what is, in truth, the abolition of marriage. How, for example, could any one reckon that woman to have lived in marriage of whom S. Jerome records that she "was married to her twenty-third husband, she herself being his twenty-first wife"? (See Lecky, "European Morals," vol. ii., p. 325.) Whatever the philosophers and "deep thinkers" may think or say, those who are straining every nerve to carry out to their natural results the teachings of these would-be wise men, and who have neither religion nor policy to compel them to moderate reticence, see this plainly enough, and have no hesitation in saying what they mean. For example, take these few sentences (the italics being in the original): "In reality, *facility of divorce does away with marriage*; it thoroughly alters the theory of the institution, and makes it, in reality, nothing more than an agreement between two people to live together as man and wife so long as they love each other. And such is the only true mode of sexual union." Again: "The great difficulty that men have found in proposing any definite change in our sexual code is, that it is almost impossible *to alter at all, without totally overthrowing*, the theory of marriage. Easily obtainable divorce does virtually overthrow the theory

of marriage ; and yet there is nothing more indispensable to the sexual welfare of married people than this." Once more : "On the Continent the nominal theory of sexual union is marriage, as with us ; and yet this, by the facility of divorce, *is virtually annulled*, and put on a par with any other kind of temporary intercourse ; so that it may be said that *marriage has ceased to exist* in those countries, where divorce is easily obtainable for such causes as incompatibility of temper. If divorce be readily obtainable in marriage, what is the use of marriage at all ?" ¹

A writer in the "Westminster Review" quotes, with the highest approbation, a passage from a work of Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, to the effect that "marriage must be attended with the most hurtful consequences when the State attempts to regulate it by laws, or, through the force of its institutions, to make it repose on anything save simple inclination. . . . The radical error of such a policy appears to be that the law commands, whereas such a relation cannot mould itself according to external arrangements, but depends wholly on inclination ; and wherever coercion or guidance comes into collision with inclination, they divert it still further from the proper path. Wherefore, the State should not only loosen the bonds in this instance, and leave ampler freedom to the citizen, but it should entirely withdraw its active solicitude from the institution of marriage, and, both generally and in its particular modifications, should rather leave it wholly to the free choice of the individuals and the various contracts they may enter into with respect to it." (Humboldt's

¹ I purposely abstain from giving references to these quotations. The book is an abomination, but it is not to be despised for all that. A work written by a man of evident education, which has reached (whatever value may be attached to these numbers) a "10th edition and 15th thousand" in English, besides having been translated into several European languages, may be odious, but cannot be insignificant : particularly when its fundamental principles are held, to a great extent at all events, by men of the highest intellectual culture and reputation.

"Sphere and Duties of Government," pp. 33, 34. Coulthard's Translation.) The writer proceeds in the same strain: "As society is at present constituted, the full measure of personal liberty with respect to our sexual relations here contended for, unspeakably desirable as we hold its attainment to be, cannot, perhaps, be practically accorded. . . . But towards the attainment of it there is a growing movement, particularly in the United States, and to some extent, in this country and on the Continent. Among persons distinguished rather for the strength than the weakness of their moral convictions there is on both sides of the Atlantic an increasing desire to emancipate their unions from conventional trammels, and to avoid in their initiation the interchange of pledges which it may be impossible in spirit, and, in that event, which it would be immoral, for them to observe. For we do not hesitate to affirm that the prolonged cohabitation of a man with a woman, after it has ceased to be sanctified by mutual affection, is as essentially immoral, when it arises from so-called religious feeling, as the pious prostitution of the ancient Babylonians in their temples; and, when from considerations of worldly convenience or advantage, as essentially immoral as the mercenary prostitution of the streets of modern London and Paris." . . . "The primary objects of marriage are the happiness and comfort of the parties to it; and it is susceptible of every variety of form which their consent can establish if it be not contrary to these objects. The stipulations which the parties might see good to make with each other should be, like those of any other contract, capable of being legally enforced. Their terms, however, whether as to the incidents or the duration of the connection, should be left to the choice and discretion of the parties themselves." (*Westminster Review*, Jan. 1870, pp. 87, 88.)

But enough. We have said sufficient to show the kind of danger to which marriage is exposed by a departure from the

divine rule of indissolubility. Once more Mr. Lecky shall speak for us: "Against these notions [of temporary connexions and facile divorces] Christianity declared a direct and implacable warfare. . . . It taught as a religious dogma, invariable, inflexible, and independent of all utilitarian calculations, that all forms of intercourse of the sexes, other than life-long unions, were criminal. . . . There is probably no other branch of ethics which has been so largely determined by special dogmatic theology, and there is none which would be so deeply affected by its decay." ("European Morals," vol. ii. p. 372.)

The indissolubility of marriage is one, and the chief, of its external defences. This principle we have already surrendered. We know not yet the end. But there is another bulwark of scarcely less importance, and this also is seriously assailed. I mean the bulwark of the prohibited degrees. All know how the Bill for legalising "marriage" with a deceased wife's sister has been brought into Parliament year after year, and has achieved a long course of success in the Commons, though the rectitude and courage of the House of Lords have hitherto saved the Statute-book from this fresh disgrace.

Here we are asked to take the first step in a course whose end, as in the matter of divorce, it is impossible to forecast. It is a demand to surrender a principle which is definite, sufficient, and founded on GOD'S Word and the explicit and uniform testimony of the Church for many an age. The prohibited degrees as received by the Church and Realm of England are derived, as has been repeatedly shown, from the moral law of the Old Testament interpreted by the Church for fifteen centuries as equally binding under the Gospel. Dr. James Hessey has ably proved that there is not one of those degrees which is not expressly or inferentially included in the moral prohibitions contained in Leviticus xviii.; and, conversely, that the table of prohibited degrees includes every

one prohibited in that passage of Holy Scripture. (See his paper published by the Marriage Law Defence Association, No. 4, "A Scripture Argument against permitting Marriage with a Wife's Sister.") To the same effect Lord Selborne, in his noble speech in opposition to the Bill in the House of Lords: "If we are to prohibit only such marriages as are prohibited by the letter of the Old Testament, we must repeal the prohibition in the case of thirteen degrees prohibited by our law and not prohibited by the letter of Leviticus; and, on the other hand, if you endeavour to arrive at the principle contained in that chapter of Leviticus, and to lay down a marriage law in accordance with that principle within the range and limits of the degrees which are prohibited there, you will arrive at our present marriage law." ("Speech of the Right Hon. Lord Selborne, Lord High Chancellor of England, in the House of Lords, March 13, 1873." Published by the Marriage Law Defence Association, 25, Parliament Street, Westminster.) Here then we have a precise and intelligible rule: The Bible interpreted by the Catholic Church for fifteen centuries. Break in on that rule and where shall we find another equally strong, equally intelligible, equally definite? Dr. Pusey asks: "Have Englishmen alone the power to stop where they will? Have they a privilege of their own to break down the first barriers and then to stop inconsistently, although they shall have put it out of their own power to plead either the Divine Law, or the rule of the Church, or instinctive feeling, which they would have already violated, as a ground against further changes? We have standing ground now, where would it be if the nation abandoned what it has?" ("Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister"; Preface, p. xxxix.)

The underlying principle of prohibition in all these degrees is simply the unity of man and wife by marriage; so that the relations which are his or hers respectively by nature become

the like relations of the other by reason of that unity. While, therefore, to advocate divorce is to impugn the permanence of the unity, to seek for marriage within the prohibited degrees is to assail its truth. Relationship by affinity, though less intense, is as real and as permanent as relationship by blood. The death of husband or wife no more dissolves such relationship than the death of parents dissolves the bonds between natural brothers and sisters. Once established, they are established once for all. Violate the principle in one degree, and there is no security against its violation in all.

The reality of the danger appears even in the evidence attached to the Report of the Royal Commissioners on the Law of Marriage in regard to Affinity. "I do not see," says one witness, "any objection to marriages where there is no consanguinity." (Evidence of Dr. Cox, "Report," p. 77, No. 849.) Another being asked: "You are of opinion that whatever the force of that expression 'one flesh' may be, the relation contemplated ceases by the death of the wife?" replied, "I do; that is my opinion, decidedly." (Rev. John Hatchard, No. 553, 554, "Report," p. 63.) The argument is applicable to the deceased wife's mother or her daughter by a former marriage, as much as to her sister. If affinity be nothing, the wife being dead, all her blood relations are free to the widower. If affinity be something, where shall the line be drawn, and by what rule? "You must consider," said Lord Selborne, in the speech already quoted, "how far your principle ought to go, and I am sure you can never stop short of the abolition of all marriages of affinity" (*sic*). ("Speech," &c., p. 4.) It is a question of the greatest possible importance and urgency, and yet it is one to which no trustworthy answer can be given. The law of GOD and of Christianity has given a rule; but it is the only one. If we reject it we must make a law for ourselves or be a law to ourselves. If affinity be altogether discarded as a prohibition of marriage,

consanguinity will next be challenged, and where shall we draw the line there? Already the consanguineous degrees are attacked. Marriage with the niece has been demanded from Parliament as well as marriage with a wife's sister. Why should it not be granted here as well as in other countries? As we now stand we have an answer ready, because our law is consistent throughout; infringe it in one point, and our real strength will be gone. "For," as Dr. Pusey says: "If the Levitical degrees are abandoned, there remains no safeguard . . . except man's natural instincts. But what are these instincts? Are they one uniform, distinct, powerful voice of nature, making herself heard equally under all circumstances, in every moral or religious condition, so that she cannot be mistaken, nor, without a convulsive shock to nature itself, be disobeyed? All experience tells us the contrary. It is against nature itself to say that our moral instincts do not very materially depend upon our whole moral condition. Such as we ourselves are, as moral or religious agents, such are our moral instincts." (*"Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister,"* Preface, p. xxxi.)

But if we are thrown back on the law of nature, where shall that law be found? Surely not among the most civilized nations of antiquity, the Greeks and Romans; for there we find uncles and nieces, nephews and aunts, half-brothers and sisters intermarrying; while of the Persians, highly civilized as they were, M'Lennan says: "The Persian customs were just those of hordes who consecrated an incestuous promiscuity into a system. If they allowed the marriage of brothers and sisters consanguineous, they also sanctioned the unions of sons and mothers, and of fathers and daughters, and in some cases required them for the purposes of religion." (*"Primitive Marriage,"* p. 223.)

Passing to the other extreme, uncivilization, we are no better off. "Chastity," says Sir John Lubbock, "was not

reckoned a virtue by the New Zealanders ; it was disapproved of, though for very different reasons, by some of the Brazilian tribes, by the inhabitants of the Ladrões, and by the Andamaners. On the other hand, the Australians would have been shocked at a man marrying a woman of his own family name [though, as he tells us elsewhere, ' If a married man dies his brother inherits the wife, who goes to her second husband's hut three days after the death of her first ' (p. 353)]. . . . It seems to the Veddahs the most natural thing in the world that a man should marry his younger sister, but marriage with an elder one is as repugnant to them as to us." —(" Prehistoric Times," pp. 458, 459.)

How far those among us who advocate facility of divorce would go in the relaxation of the prohibited degrees, I am not prepared to say¹; but I have not found that those who insist on "simple inclination" or "free choice" as the only determining law of marriage—which is but the natural development of the theory of free and equal contract on both

¹ The following passage from Lord Selborne's speech is valuable as indicating how dangerous it is to the whole law of marriage to tamper with it in one part, especially on the assumed authority of Holy Writ : " One noble lord has sought to establish it as a fundamental principle that no marriage can be prohibited, except the prohibition can be directly supported by some text in Scripture. But how could that noble lord, in accordance with that principle, prohibit polygamy? . . . Opinions have been forcibly expressed by some in favour of polygamy, and one author, not a bishop indeed, but a popular clergyman and the brother of a bishop in the last century, has traced many of the present evils which trouble us to its prohibition in this country. We are told how well marriage with a deceased wife's sister answers where it has been tried. But the same thing has been said of polygamy ; and I think the statement is of about as much value in the one case as in the other. . . . We comforted ourselves with the belief that respect for the sanctity of marriage stood high in this country, until the Divorce Court was established. We cannot speak quite as complacently now ; but marriage is still held among us to be honourable. How is it that marriage in some other countries is less respected ? Do we not know that the facilities for divorce in some of those countries depreciate the estimation in which the marriage vow is held?" — (" Speech," &c, pp. 6, 7.)

sides—make any particular reservation on this ground. Whatever danger may arise from this quarter will also be encouraged by such scientific writers who, putting aside Christian revelation, and especially Christian dogma, as outside the sphere of their investigations, treat man, physically and morally, as if he were little if anything more than a mammal highly developed and improved by natural and sexual selection. Therefore, though the scope of the following passage is by no means clear, it is enough to make men ponder and be watchful: "When the principles of breeding and of inheritance are better understood, we shall not hear ignorant members of our legislature rejecting with scorn a plan for ascertaining by an easy method whether or not consanguineous marriages are injurious to man. . . . Man, like every other animal, has no doubt advanced to his present high condition through a struggle for existence consequent on his rapid multiplication, and if he is to advance still higher he must remain subject to a severe struggle. . . . Hence, there should be open competition for all men; and the most able should not be prevented by laws or customs from succeeding best and rearing the largest number of offspring." (Darwin: "Descent of Man," vol. ii. p. 403.)

Regarded as a mere question of scientific zoology, it seems possible, if not probable, that consanguineous marriages may find advocates. A paper, for example, was read in the Zoological Section of the British Association in 1862, by Dr. Gilbert Child, entitled "On Marriages of Consanguinity." In this paper the author stated the question thus: "Two opposite views of the effect of the above marriages have been held: 1. That they are unnatural, and entail degeneracy upon their offspring as a natural consequence, and independently of the ordinary laws of inheritance. 2. That they are not contrary to any law of nature; and that when ill consequences are observed to follow them, they do so by ordinary

inheritance only." After investigation of evidence derived from man and lower animals, we are told : "The writer's conclusions are as follows : 1. That statistical evidence from observation of man is peculiarly inapplicable to questions of the kind under discussion. 2. That the evidence in favour of the opinion that close breeding is contrary to a law of nature is highly unsatisfactory. 3. That there is positive evidence, from the results of recorded observations upon animals, that no such law affects them, i.e., that where the causes of degeneracy are absent, any degree of close breeding may exist without producing ill effects ; and, therefore, 4. Unless we are prepared to believe in two distinct physiologies, the same must be true of the human race." ("Report of the British Association for 1862." "Miscellaneous Communications," pp. 104, 105.)

Greatly as the sanctity of marriage would be infringed by the relaxation of one only of the prohibited degrees, there could be no security against its going much further in course of time. And how grievously the evil would be inflamed by even the existing law of divorce, all must see. Once let union with a dead wife's sister be a legal "marriage," and it would be legally competent to a man, with the help of the divorce court, to take a whole family of sisters in turn during the lives of all, ending by returning to his first wife of the series. An extreme hypothesis, certainly, but thoroughly within the law, which permits the divorced to marry again just as if the former marriage had been terminated by death. It is only by combining the effects of the divorce laws with those of a relaxation of the prohibited degrees that we can really estimate the enormous iniquities which would thus become legal.

I shall not do more than refer to the social and family confusions which must result from the breaking down the fences *with which* Christianity has surrounded the holiness of

marriage. The weakening and confusion of family ties and family relationships, the neglected education and quasi-orphanage of children, the total destruction of the true idea of home, which might be the frequent consequences of unions lightly formed and as lightly sundered, are but a few of the most obvious social evils into which we might gradually be led. It is no part of my present purpose to enlarge on these. Here I wish only to call attention to a certain fact that there is rising a vast groundswell of rebellion against GOD'S holy institution of marriage, of which the public agitation against existing law is but the fringing foam where the waves are beating against the barrier rocks. Of all the perils of the age this is at once one of the most urgent and most full of meaning.

I have now considered, as fully as space will permit, the two principal dangers from without to which the sanctity of marriage is now especially exposed, namely, that arising from the present law of divorce, and that arising from the unintermitted endeavours to break in on the prohibited degrees. It were much to be wished that these were all. But unhappily there are others not less dangerous but more subtle. Concerning these it is almost equally difficult to speak or to be silent. Difficult to speak—because though there is too much reason to fear that this class of evils is already but too common, as it is undoubtedly propagated with zeal wherever there is the least opening, yet at present, with comparatively rare exceptions, its apostles and their teachings are not likely to be met with in decent society. Doubtless they are there occasionally, oftener perhaps than we are aware, but not avowedly in that character. Yet lower in the social scale doctrines are taught without any reticence, both orally and through the press, which are not less unholy in their tendency, and frequently in their express aim, than those to which I have already referred. It is, I say, difficult to speak of these things, for the sake of those who as yet, by GOD'S grace,

know not the evil. It is almost as difficult to be silent because, when pestilence rages, it is a poor and deluded charity to say, "Peace, peace," where there is none. These things, dreadful as they are, cannot safely be ignored. When they crouch, apparently innocuously, under the protection of marriage, their influence is just as likely to be deadly though for a while unseen.

Perhaps I may here be permitted to repeat a few sentences from my earlier Essay: "They [the young] should learn that it is as easy to sin *in* marriage as *out* of it; that, perhaps they will find prayer, vigilance . . . the mighty strengthening of the HOLY SPIRIT . . . needful for nothing more than for this, to attain grace to keep the perfection of the Apostolic precept, seemingly so simple; 'Ye husbands, dwell with the Lord according to knowledge . . .' GOD did not ordain marriage that man might do in it what he would, without sinning. It was not to release him from the conflict with evil, but to aid him in it, and shield him against final defeat." ("The Church and the World," 2nd Series, p. 110.)

"To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity is as much the duty of the married as of the single, of the grown man or woman as of the Christian child. It is as much a part of our "duty towards our neighbour" as of our duty towards ourselves, a duty as stringent as "not to covet nor desire other men's goods, but to learn and labour truly to get" our "own living." It is to the married as to the single, a mutual duty as towards each other, no less than in regard to others. Most true it is, as Holy Scripture teaches, that "the wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband, as the Lord's Church, which is the Body of Christ, and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife." But with the "power" comes also a duty and responsibility: a "power" to be used with fear and reverence, knowing that the "body" over which it extends is a body made in the image of the Body, and sacramentally made c

with the very Body itself of GOD. "Holy Matrimony," says our own Marriage office, "is not of any to be enterprised nor taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding." And if not to be so "taken in hand," surely not to be so lived in. Not "unadvisedly;" carelessly or thoughtlessly of the consequences, temporal and spiritual, which it may involve. There should be "prudence," true Christian prudence and forethought, and a readiness for self-denial, if GOD'S Providence point to it as a duty (as it may be), lest we virtually fall into a breach of the tenth Commandment while we are careful to observe the seventh, and indirectly "covet or desire other men's goods" rather than to the best of our knowledge and power "learn and labour truly to get our own living." Not "lightly;" as regarding the pleasure of a moment more than the irrevocable vows and the judgment to come. Not "wantonly;" in a low carnal materialistic spirit, "like brute beasts;" "but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of GOD:" weighty words, every one.

"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD: Your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST, which is in you, and ye are not your own: therefore glorify GOD in your body and in your spirit, which are GOD'S." There is our rule, and the rationale of it. Our bodies have wants: GOD supplies them; that in the use of that which He supplies, and through its means, we may glorify the GOD Who gives it. There is no gift, no relief, no lawful gratification of any bodily want without its corresponding responsibility, an obligation in and by it to glorify Him Whose we are. They all neither begin nor end with ourselves. To tamper in our blindness and ignorance and self-will with His holy ordinances must ever be attended with extreme danger. To do so on pretence of honouring Him

better is dangerous; if we do it consciously, above all wilfully ignoring or despising Him, intolerably profane.

There are many who "will not have this MAN to reign over" them, though to Him has been given all power in heaven and in earth. They will not own Him as the Maker and LORD of all things, the Divine yet Human "LORD of the visible earth." The awful length to which some of them carry their blasphemy would be scarcely credible did not their own words testify to it. For example: "This is a certain truth, that any human being, any one of us, no matter how fallen or degraded, is an infinitely more glorious and adorable being than any GOD that ever was or will be conceived. *Man* is the true object of man's reverence and love. . . . Man, the consummation of Nature, is infinitely above any supernatural conception." Again: "Everything leads us to the profound and earnest conviction that Nature is all in all; that there is nothing above, beneath, or beside her; and that to her should be transferred all the allegiance which has been hitherto paid to the supernatural. This grand truth is the foundation of modern thought, and is probably the most important conclusion (next to the knowledge of the law of population, compared with which every other is insignificant) [an exception of frightful significance, and most closely connected with 'allegiance to Nature'] to which our race has yet arrived." . . . "Let us not deceive ourselves; we cannot serve two masters. *Belief in GOD is disbelief in Nature.*" [The italics are in the original.]

What is this worship of "Nature"? The Apostle has virtually described it in five words, "Whose God is their belly." It is in regard to morals a system of absolute irresponsibility save to one's own selfishness. It is a theory of a life differing from that of brutes only in so far as higher reasoning powers may enable us to extract from it greater and more varied enjoyment in absolute independence of GOD

or of law. Every sensual desire is "natural," therefore it ought to be indulged. It is "a sin against nature" not to indulge it; the only check being "prudential" lest we interfere with the exercise of some other equally natural and equally useful desire. We are, in a word, to live a life replete with every gift, every pleasure, every indulgence, but with no duty, no responsibility, no gratitude, no account, to the Giver and LORD of all. The body is to be "reverenced," not as Christians reverence it, but as "nature" persuades. A life brutal at the core, however "refined" and "civilized" and developed by the "advance of liberty" and the "progress of modern thought."

Hence the internecine war waged by the secularists and materialists against marriage as an institution, whether of divine or human law. Hence, also, that constant, sometimes covert, sometimes open, insistence on the "laws of population," and that inquiry into "the best means of checking its progress," which conceals depths of iniquity both within and without the marriage union. "There is scarcely anything," says one of their own prophets, "on which so much stress is laid in the Old and New Testament as the institution of marriage. Fidelity and constancy to the marriage vow are regarded as the very highest virtues; and all unmarried connections, which are stigmatized as fornications and carnal lusts, are classed among the deadly sins. Hence the institution of marriage has been made a religious ceremony, and is believed in by great numbers as firmly as Christianity itself, of which it is considered a part. It is this *divine right* of marriage which has rendered most people blind to the evils of the institution, and has raised a storm of indignation against any one who ventured to point them out. The institution is guarded as jealously as supernaturalism itself. . . . But not for much longer will a divine right avail aught to protect any earthly thing; nor can any institution

which is based upon Supernaturalism, and not upon Nature, long continue among us. Men will not much longer be content to take the laws of their actions from any other source than *Nature*; and all institutions will be tested by this, and this only. Those among us who are the most strenuous in the support of existing sexual institutions, and most authoritative in laying down the laws of sexual morality, are the very men who, like the judges of Galileo, are most incompetent to give an opinion on the matter. . . . Are they well acquainted with the law of population?" Or again: "Our moral code bears in every line the marks of having been framed by those who were ignorant of the fundamental laws of our sexual nature, . . . who were perfectly unacquainted with the principle of population. . . . *Till Mr. Malthus wrote it was not possible to have a true sexual code*, for no man knew the principle of population, on which alone it could be based." [The italics are in the original.]

Truly these must be they for whom the very words of the Psalm were written: "Take heed, ye unwise among the people; O ye fools, when will ye understand? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that made the eye, shall He not see? or He that nutureth the heathen, it is He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He punish? The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain."

It would be a mistake to think that these evil principles and doctrines are restricted to the lower class of unbelievers. Of course among them they are more openly and unblushingly promulgated, and for that reason they have there, under present circumstances, the most general acceptance. But were they confined to these, what then? They would be no less dangerous, no less opposed to that holiness which is necessary for rich and poor alike. Rather, it may be, ought they to be more resolutely exposed as ruining those who are

more especially the charge of the Church of GOD. But the case is, indeed, otherwise. The fountains whence these teachers draw their inspiration, the authorities on whom they rely for their influence, are found at times among highly educated and intellectual men. It has been so abroad to a greater extent than among ourselves, but to some extent here also, though generally such men use remarkably guarded and cautiously suggestive language. Take, for example, the following passage from the pen of Mr. James Mill, the historian of British India, and the father of the late John Stuart Mill: "What are *the best means of checking the progress of population*, when it cannot go on unrestrained, without producing one or other of two most undesirable effects—either drawing an undue proportion of the population to the mere raising of food, or producing poverty and wretchedness, it is not now the time to inquire. It is indeed the most important practical problem to which the wisdom of the politician and moralist can be applied. It has till this time been miserably evaded by all those who have meddled with the subject, as well as by all those who were called upon by their situation to find a remedy for the evil to which it relates. And yet, *if the superstitions of the nursery were discarded*, and the principle of utility kept steadily in view, a solution might not be very difficult to be found, and the means of drying up one of the most copious sources of human evil, a source which, if all other sources of evil were taken away, would alone suffice to retain the great mass of human beings in misery, might be seen to be neither doubtful nor difficult to be applied." ("Encyclopædia Britannica," 8th edition. Article, "Colony," p. 138, col. 2.) [The italics are *not* in the original.]

It may be worth while to present the reader with a comment on this remarkable passage by a quondam light of the Atheistical party, now a prominent leader of the Spiritualists, Robert Dale Owen, son of the well-known socialist, Robert

Owen. In a work which passed through several editions in America many years ago, and was republished in London in 1870, he observes: "Let my readers bear in mind that this is from the pen of one of the most admired writers of the present day, a man celebrated throughout Europe for his works on political economy. . . . He considers the question now under discussion to involve 'the most important problem to which the wisdom of the politician and moralist can be applied.' This question, he admits, has been 'miserably evaded.' Yet even a man so influential and clear-sighted as Mill must himself yield to the weakness he reprobates, must speak in parables, as the Nazarene reformer did before him, and even while commenting on the 'miserable evasion' of a subject so engrossingly important, must imitate the very evasion he despises." He adds in a note: "I speak here as regretting the circumstance, not as censuring the individual. It is probable that, had Mill spoken more plainly, his essay would have been refused admission into the Encyclopædia."

Again, Mr. James Mill says elsewhere: "We know well that there are two causes by which it [population] may be prevented from increasing, how great soever its natural tendency to increase. The one is poverty. . . . The other cause is prudence; by which either marriages are sparingly contracted, or *care is taken that children, beyond a certain number, shall not be the fruit.*" ("Elements of Political Economy," p. 34.) And once more: "The result to be aimed at is, to secure to the great body of the people all the happiness which is capable of being derived from the matrimonial union, *preventing the evils which the too rapid increase of their numbers would entail.* The progress of legislation, the improvement of the education of the people, and *the decay of superstition,* will in time, it may be hoped, accomplish the difficult task of reconciling these important objects." (Ibid. p. 44.) [The italics are *not* in the original.]

If we now turn from the celebrated and influential father to the still more celebrated and influential son, the late John Stuart Mill, we find manifest traces of the same moral poison, though he is, if possible, still more guarded in his language ; at the same time avowing that the "moral conceptions" [of the Socialists] are "in many respects far ahead of the existing arrangements of society." ("Political Economy," vol. ii. p. 364, 5th edition.) He says: "Even in a progressive state of capital in old countries a conscientious or *prudential restraint* on population is indispensable to prevent the increase of numbers from outstripping the increase of capital, and the condition of the classes who are at the bottom of society from being deteriorated. Where there is not in the people, or in some very large proportion of them, a resolute resistance to this deterioration—the condition of the poorest classes sinks to the lowest point which they will consent to endure. . . . Even now the countries in which the greatest *prudence* is manifested in the regulating of population, are often those in which capital increases least rapidly. . . . If it were evident that a new hand could not obtain employment but by displacing or succeeding to one already employed, the combined influences of *prudence* and public opinion might in some measure be relied on for restricting the coming generation within the numbers necessary for replacing the present." (John Stuart Mill, "Political Economy," vol. ii. p. 328.) Again: "In some other countries, and particularly in France, population advances still more slowly, and ever with increasing slowness; its growth being kept down not by poverty—but by *prudence*." (Ibid. p. 269.) Again: "Only when, in addition to just institutions, the increase of mankind shall be under the deliberate guidance of *judicious foresight*, can the conquests made from the powers of nature by the intellect and energy of scientific discoverers become the common property of the species, and the

means of improving and elevating the universal lot." p. 332.)

These apparently (and to those who are happily ignorant of the evil, really) harmless terms above printed in italics towards a kind of vice which cannot be more explicitly named here. It has been suggested by a very high authority that an explanation might be given in Latin. But it is better only to declare plainly that these innocent-sounding phrases are actually, and I cannot but fear were designedly suggestive of grave forms of immorality very common in some countries, and, unhappily, by no means unknown in our country. Documentary information as to this vice is within the reach of all whose duty it may be to investigate it; but I will add that its gravity is sufficiently evidenced by the concluding words quoted above from Mr. Robert Dale Owen, to the effect that plainer speaking on the part of Mr. James Mill probably have occasioned the exclusion of his article from the *Encyclopædia*.

Let those who are not called to deal with these things remain on, in GOD'S Name, and may His Grace evermore protect them from every carnal sin; but let those who are called to fear to obey the voice, in His strength Who is able to keep them safe through all. What is to become of the robbed and wounded souls dying by the way if priests and Levites of the whole Israel of GOD will not even come and look on them, but pass by on the other side?

Taken as the above extracts are from works of great celebrity and in every one's hands, or at least within every one's reach, no apology may be necessary for reproducing them here. But I very much doubt whether they have received the serious attention which their significance demands. Though the authors may speak in parables, there are plenty of men who know the interpretation, and are not slow to use their authority in the promulgation of their pernicious

ciples. When such doctrines are preached, however reservedly, in high places, it cannot be pretended that they are either too insignificant to be noticed, or restricted in their influence only to the lowest and most morally degraded ranks of society. It is a part of a system, and that system can scarcely be more tersely or truly described than by the converse of a proposition quoted above: "Let us not deceive ourselves; no man can serve two masters; belief in 'Nature' is disbelief in GOD." It is a system popularly represented by such men as Messrs. Bradlaugh and Holyoake,¹ and the contributors to the "*National Reformer*," the aim of which Mr. Gladstone in powerful language denounced in his address at the Liverpool College in December, 1872. "It is not now," said he, "only the Christian Church, or only the Holy Scripture, or only Christianity, which is attacked. The disposition is boldly proclaimed to deal alike with root and branch, and to snap utterly the ties which, under the still venerable name of Religion, unite man with the unseen world, and lighten the struggles and the woes of life by the hope of a better land." (Quoted in the "*Annual Address of the Victoria Institute*," May 20, 1873, p. 5.)

Nothing is more certain than that the vilification of marriage and the increasing rebellion against its moral and social restraints is something more deep-seated and more far-reaching than a rebellion against the law of purity only. On a former

¹ It will be remembered that some scandal was caused a few years ago, when Mr. C. Bradlaugh was a candidate for a seat in Parliament, by Mr. John Stuart Mill contributing publicly towards his election expenses. Disgraceful as it was in a man in Mill's position, it is but too probable that it was only the expression of a genuine and hearty sympathy with the views of religion and morals maintained by the class of whose opinions the "*National Reformer*," under Mr. Bradlaugh's editorship, is one of the principal exponents. It is even more discreditable that men of high position and lofty character, such as Lord Salisbury and the Bishop of S. David's, should have publicly contributed to a memorial of one who, with the highest intellectual powers, was a known enemy of Christianity, and in some respects of public morality.

occasion (in "The Church and the World") I endeavoured to show how closely this law is connected with the twin-law (as I may term it) of obedience; how, in fact, by GOD'S appointment, holy Matrimony is on earth the great witness against the two principles peculiarly characteristic of Anti-Christ and energizing in a denial of the Incarnation; the principles, namely, of impurity and lawlessness, of "uncleanliness and despising government." In the preceding pages this has been incidentally noticed; but before I conclude it must be referred to more particularly.

In accordance with the mysteriously close connexion between the spirit of lawlessness and licentiousness, we find the school most hostile to the sacred purity of marriage most hostile also to the principle of subjection to authority as such. The two enmities are ominously linked together. This gives to all the pernicious nonsense about "the rights of women" a significance which some, but not the most far-seeing, of its advocates perhaps little contemplate. When we can get at the plain, undisguised truth we see how it is, what it is all tending to, if not what it actually means already. Bearing in mind what Mr. Lecky has said: "It is impossible to deny that the form which these [the sexual] relations at present assume has been very largely affected by special religious teaching, which, for good or ill, is rapidly waning in the sphere of government" ("European Morals," vol. ii. p. 392); and that "there is no other branch of ethics which would be so deeply affected by the decay of dogmatic theology" (Ibid. p. 372); and this from Mr. Mill: "The principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes, the legal subordination of one sex to the other, is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement: and it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side nor disability on the other" ("Subjection," &c., p. 1); bearing

this in mind, let us see how a disciple of Mill works out the idea.

“The position of the wife (he says) in the eyes of the law has already become a grave scandal in our civilization; and everything points to the conclusion that . . . great changes in the law will shortly be made.” Again: “The cause of polygamy is the subjection of women—the custom of regarding women in the light of property, and applying to the possession of wives the maxims which regulate the ownership of other valuables.” . . . “Much of what I have said of polygamy applies to the monogamous marriages of modern times and of civilized nations, because these marriages are in reality founded upon the essential conditions of the polygamy from which they sprang, and are monogamous only by Act of Parliament or by Canon of Council. The wife is still dependent upon the husband for subsistence, and bound to render him in return honour, obedience, and what the marriage service calls *love*. This dependence is still founded on the inferior position which the woman holds in the world, which, on the one hand, prevents her from gaining by her labour as a single woman so honourable and comfortable a position in life as she acquires by making herself the appendage of a man; and on the other hand, prevents her from enjoying honourable love and maternity in any other than the subordinate position of a woman chosen by a man for sexual purposes, and whom the State obliges him to keep for the purpose of bearing children.” . . . Again, he writes: “There is a very strong natural tendency in love to beget equality between those who feel it, and a tendency in the relationship of superior and inferior, which necessitates the exertion of authority, to prevent the growth of love. The growth of equality is one of the effects of civilisation, and is a powerful cause of its advancement; and the exercise of authority by one human being over another is always a cause

of degeneracy to the character of both. Both of these eminently natural tendencies are frustrated by marriage." And once more: "Liberty of thought and of action has become the birthright of every human being; and to sell that birthright for such a sorry mess of pottage as the protection of a husband has now become, is an action which, were it judged upon its own merits, would be deemed far from honourable." . . . "The progress of machinery and the spread of education have destroyed the domestic character of woman's labour and the childish nature of her ideas, so that the sphere of her aspirations and of her influence is every day increasing; and it is by no means improbable that when women acquire—what they never before have possessed—a voice in the determination of their own destiny, they will pronounce against unlimited maternity on the one hand, and against unlimited degradation on the other."¹

Let us now compare the above extracts with the following from Mr. Mill: "The slavery of the female sex has been gradually changed into a milder form of dependence. But this dependence, as it exists at present, is the primitive state of slavery lasting on through successive mitigations and modifications. . . . It has not lost the taint of its brutal origin." ("Subjection of Women," pp. 9, 10.) Again, Mr. Mill writes: "Even with true affection, authority on the one side and subordination on the other prevent perfect confidence. . . . The truth is, that the position of looking up to another is extremely unpropitious to complete sincerity and openness with him." (pp. 44, 45.) . . . "The equality of human beings is the theory of Christianity, but which Christianity will never practically teach while it sanctions institutions grounded on an arbitrary preference of one human being over another." (p. 78.) . . . "The family, justly constituted, would be the

¹ For reasons somewhat similar to those already given in regard to another work, I abstain from adding references to these quotations.

real school of the virtues of freedom. . . . What is needed is, that it should be a school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience on the other. This it ought to be between the parents." (p. 82.) Again: "Here, I believe, is the clue to the feelings of those men who have a real antipathy to the equal freedom of women. I believe they are afraid lest they should insist that marriage should be on equal conditions; lest all women of spirit and capacity should prefer doing almost anything else, not in their own eyes degrading, rather than marry, when marrying is giving themselves to a master, and a master of all their earthly possessions. And truly, if this consequence were necessarily incident to marriage, I think that the apprehension would be very well founded." (pp. 51, 52.) . . . "The wife is the actual bondservant of her husband; no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called. She vows a life-long obedience to him at the altar, and is held to it all through her life by law." (p. 55.) And once more: "I shall only indicate among the probable consequences of the intellectual and social independence of women a great diminution of the evil of over-population." ("Political Economy, vol. ii. p. 335, 5th ed.)

Really there is not much to choose in principle between the master (whom many of the greatest names in the country have conspired publicly to honour) and the disciple (whom they would probably agree to reprobate). Both are actuated by an intense (we might really almost say a ferocious) hostility to marriage as enshrining GOD'S law of obedience. One at least openly avows his abhorrence of the obedience and subordination of marriage as interposing a barrier against a wild and lawless licentiousness. How about the other? I prefer that another should answer this question: "If the parties to a contract of marriage are treated as equals, it is impossible to avoid the inference that marriage, like other

partnerships, may be dissolved at pleasure. The advocates of women's rights are exceedingly shy of stating this plainly. Mr. Mill says nothing about it in his book on the 'Subjection of Women,' though in one place he comes very near to saying so ; but it is as clear an inference from his principles as anything can possibly be, nor has he ever disavowed it." ("Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." By James Fitzjames Stephen, Q.C., pp. 214, 215.)

Under one or another pretext, the apostles of lawlessness and the apostles of licentiousness pour out their joint vials of hatred upon the holy ordinance of marriage, because they have either a conscious or unconscious intuition that it is the greatest witness on earth to the twin principles of authority and purity, the law of whose being is enshrined in and consecrated for evermore by the Incarnation.

The outcry about the slavery of woman and the tyranny of marriage is but an outgrowth of a deeper principle, viz., the abhorrence of all law, of everything which contradicts self-will. Mr. Mill's book on this subject is characterized by Mr. Fitzjames Stephen in terms exceptionally but certainly not unjustly severe, as : "The strongest distinct illustration known to me of what is perhaps one of the strongest, and what appears to me to be by far the most ignoble and mischievous of all the popular feelings of the age." ("Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," p. 204.)

And after making several quotations he proceeds : "These passages show what Mr. Mill's doctrine of Equality is, and how it forms the very root, the essence so to speak, of his theory about the subjection of women. I consider it unsound in every respect. I think that it rests upon an unsound view of history, an unsound view of morals, and a grotesquely distorted view of facts; and I believe that its practical application would be as injurious as its theory is false." (p. 208.)

The essence of Mr. Mill's system may be stated, says

Mr. Stephen, in this among other propositions: "It is inexpedient that any law should recognize any inequality between human beings." (p. 209.) And "this," he continues, 'appears to me to involve the assertion, 'There are no inequalities between human beings of sufficient importance to influence the rights and duties which it is expedient to confer upon them.' " (p. 210.) And once more, after showing how the duty of the practical subordination of the wife may often arise, he adds with a noble indignation: "I also say that to regard this as a humiliation, as a wrong, as an evil in itself, is a mark not of spirit and courage, but of a base, unworthy, mutinous disposition—a disposition utterly subversive of all that is most worth having in life. The tacit assumption involved in it is, that it is a degradation ever to give up one's own will to the will of another; and to me this appears the root of all evil." (p. 218.)¹

And here we have indeed reached the root of the whole matter. Seriously considering all these things, we gain more light on the intimate yet mysterious connexion existing between those "who live after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness" and those who "despise government." We see more clearly what is the vivifying principle and what the legitimate issue of the persistent virulence with which the integrity and sanctity of marriage is attacked. We see what means "for-

¹ "From this increase of intelligence several effects may be confidently anticipated. First, that they [the mass of the people] will become even less willing than at present to be led and governed, and directed into the way they should go, by the mere authority and prestige of superiors. If they have not now, still less will they have hereafter, any deferential awe, or religious principle of obedience, holding them in mental subjection to a class above them. The theory of dependence and protection will become more and more intolerable to them, and they will require that their conduct and condition shall be essentially self-governed. . . . The same reason which makes it no longer necessary that the poor should depend on the rich, makes it equally unnecessary that women should depend on men." (John Stuart Mill's "Principles of Political Economy," vol. ii. pp. 334, 335.)

bidding to marry;" and how intensely antipathetic it is to the precept, "Keep thyself pure." We see that to denounce the command, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands," really means rebellion against "the LORD" and against all authority, human and divine; the quintessence of "lawlessness." Stripped of all disguise, it is the naked spirit of the Anti-Christ and nothing else.

Many parts of this paper, I know, have been treading on delicate ground, and I have ventured to allude, however remotely, to some things on which I would most gladly have kept silence. Many far worse things are behind, to which not even the remotest allusion was possible. Still, what has been said has been said of deliberate purpose, because I know that it is high time that Christians should rouse themselves to consider what all these things mean. To shut our eyes to the work and aims of the devil and his angels will not defeat them. If Christian men will not turn their backs cowardly on some of the deadliest enemies of their LORD, they *must* make up their minds to face bravely some of the most hateful and loathsome forms of sin, as both taught and practised (and that systematically and purposely), with full knowledge whereunto they lead. And they must realise the fact that the whole system hangs together; there can be no undermining of the sanctity of marriage at any point without a dangerous loosening of the whole fabric. Remember GOD's Word, the spirits of uncleanness and of *anomia* (lawlessness) are in close league, the most deadly foes of the doctrine of an Incarnate GOD.

What has been done cannot now be undone. It is hopeless to expect that the State will retrace its steps in regard to divorce. On the contrary the only recommendation of the Royal Commissioners on this subject is that the Scotch law should be assimilated to the English, so as to admit of "the intermarriage of persons declared, by the sentence of a divorce

court, to have been guilty of adultery together." ("Report," p. 36.) Again, the fatal theory of consistency! Still there is no reason whatever why Christians who reverence GOD'S laws above human legislation, however consistent, may not use every means in their power to demand a repeal of what is evil. Had it no other effect, it would add great moral force to their opposition, which ought to be most unwearied, united, and indomitable, to any further relaxation of the marriage law, whether as regards facility of divorce or of union within the prohibited degrees. On the latter point we have as yet made good our position; we have nothing to regain, only to hold fast that which we have.

Then, as one man we ought to resolve that nothing shall ever induce us to condone in public or in private life violations of GOD'S law in either of the above-named directions. No "position," secular or ecclesiastical, no previously high character or "respectability," no legality, no worldly indifference, no fear of being called bigots, no consideration whatever should induce us to treat or to designate adultery as anything but adultery, or incest as anything but incest. Of course, I do not mean that we should go about the world reviling others or blazoning their evil report everywhere. No pure hearted, loving Christian could for a moment think of this. But I mean, that as a truly noble Christian man will when necessity arises treat a swindler as a swindler, a liar as a liar, a thief as a thief, yet without any violation of the Christian law of charity, so we should also, regarding the same royal law, resolve to treat the legalized adulterer as an adulterer still though legalized, and the incestuous person, whether legalized or not, as an incestuous person still. In other words, let us show by our actions that we do regard the law of GOD, and the Catholic interpretation of that law by the Universal Church of GOD, as the one and only law for us, and that in comparison human laws are as though they were not. Let

us be charitable, but on our part also consistent ; and let it be seen and known what word we believe and what laws we obey, all the more plainly should the law of the land happen to be against them.

It may be the duty of some to probe to the bottom the "doctrine of devils" which is industriously taught through the length and breadth of this land of ours. It is ruining thousands of souls and bodies, and some must surely be called of GOD to go forth and save them. In His Name let them not fear. They may have, as it were, to "go down to hell," but "He is there also," and will bring them through the fire that they shall not be burned.

The Christian doctrine of Marriage is a citadel round which the war between GOD and Satan will rage fiercely. In defending this, we shall be defending much more than would appear on the surface. In surrendering this, in whatever degree, we shall be spreading moral ruin far and wide, and betraying more of the faith than we are aware. For, as it is assuredly true (as Mr. Lecky has said) that no other branch of ethics would be so deeply affected as that of the mutual relations of the sexes by the decay of dogmatic theology, so it is as surely true that the corruption of this branch of ethics must and will react with reciprocal force on dogmatic theology, and especially on the faith in its great Cardinal Verity, the Incarnation of the SON of GOD.

JOHN WALTER LEA.

Studies in Modern Problems.

CREATION AND MODERN SCIENCE.

THERE are quarters in which it is no longer argued, but rather taken for granted and made the basis of proposed social and political re-arrangements, that no one of ordinary ability and common honesty can suppose Revelation and Science to be capable of meeting any longer on friendly terms, and holding their ground together. And further, it is frequently imagined that this assumed incompatibility must be a subject of great concern and serious alarm to all devout persons and sincere believers of Christianity, while the man of science need not trouble himself about the matter, or entertain for a moment the idea that his investigations can suffer any loss from no account being taken in them of anything that what is called the Word of GOD may have to say about the subject-matter to which they relate.

Now I feel sure that a great mistake is made as to the alarm and perturbation with which it is supposed that religious men either do or should regard the course of modern speculation. The lesson which was given to all concerned, by the result of the disturbance occasioned in men's minds when the discoveries of Galileo were being made known to the world, though it has been constantly referred to, has hardly ever, I think, been understood in all its real significance. We have long since become accustomed to the idea of our earth being a comparatively small body, physically neither central nor very important even in the system to which it immediately belongs. We have been taught from our infancy to regard it, not as the fixed centre round which

the expanse of heaven and all that is in it revolves, but as itself ever turning on its own axis and flying along a vast orbit in which it is retained by the controlling power of the sun. We have become so familiar with these ideas, and so convinced of their reality, that we are positively unable to appreciate the shock which was given to the minds of sincere believers of Revelation, when the facts were first announced. And yet there was nothing imaginary or uncalled for in their consternation. It shows an entire misunderstanding of their position to suppose, as is commonly done, that all that was needed to rectify their reading of Scripture was to understand a few phrases, which implied that the sun moved or the earth stood still, as being spoken in a popular way. No ; the apparent opposition between Scripture and the new theories lay far deeper than that. The whole Bible is unquestionably written from a point of view which regards the earth as the centre of the universe ; and the statement contained in the first chapter of Genesis respecting the origin of the sun, moon, and stars, after the earth had been created, and had undergone various mutations, had been supplied with light, furnished with an atmosphere, freed from superfluous waters, and clothed with the verdure of the vegetable kingdom, appeared necessarily to imply that its pre-eminence in the creation was a physical and not merely a spiritual fact.

But not only had the men of Galileo's time good reason to feel a difficulty, but further—and this is the point on which I wish to insist—that difficulty has never really been removed. Attempts have indeed been made, by the late Dr. McCaul and others, to explain the matter by means of Laplace's theory of the formation of the solar system, and it is not impossible that in this direction the reconciliation of Scripture with modern astronomical science may finally be discovered. But hitherto such attempts must only be looked upon as very partially successful ; and even as far as they go, they are

known and cared about by a very limited portion of those who firmly believe in Revelation. Men of every degree of intelligence and education know well—when they look out upon the starlit heaven—what is the earth's insignificant and dependent position among its glorious orbs, and yet feel sure, when they read their Bibles, that something of which the account there given is a true representation did really occur as the result of the fourth day's work. Nor does this state of mind deserve to be condemned as the result of carelessness or want of logical precision. A man may have the best possible reasons for believing the truth of each of two facts that seem to him incompatible, and may well be content to wait patiently for the coming of the trusted friend who informed him of them both, in order to learn how it is that they can be made to fit into one another. He who is so confident of the infallible working of his own intellect, that he can never submit to entertain, as long as need be, two well-sustained propositions that appear to him to be contradictory, will be ever snatching at illusory solutions, casting away precious truths, and failing to attain that higher ground from which the apparent difficulty would be seen to have vanished away.

Now all that has been said with reference to the discoveries of Galileo is immediately applicable to modern scientific speculations, and especially to the theory that man has been developed out of some lower form of life. The time may come when men will be as firmly convinced of this fact, as they are now that the earth revolves upon its own axis. It is possible too that, when that time comes, all the attempts that may have been made to remove the difficulties which the statements of GOD'S Word appear to throw in the way of such an idea, may have proved entirely unsatisfactory. I shall, indeed, before I conclude, have something further to say as to these difficulties, but for the present, I ask the reader to contemplate the possibility of overwhelming

evidence arising in favour of the theory of development, before any satisfactory explanation has been given of words of Holy Scripture with which that theory may seem to be inconsistent. And I assert that, looking at what has occurred already, we may feel sure that, in this case, too, honest and humble-minded men, who are sincere believers in Revelation, will learn to look upon the animal world with a new interest, from a certainty of their own intimate connection with it, and yet go on believing upon the authority of Holy Scripture that man was in some way created on the same day as the beasts from which he is said to have sprung, and created, unlike them, in the "image" of Him Who made him.

But I hinted that Science itself might be suffering some loss from the refusal of its votaries to take into consideration the statements of Revelation respecting matters in which they are interested. Scientific investigations at the present time go back to ages so remote ; they have to grope their way in places where the track is so faint, and the light so obscure, that they might well accord at any rate an impartial examination to any hint that may be given by a record which professes to come from One to Whom that distant past is as clear as the present. May not enquirers into the constitution of the sun and the fixed stars be missing one clue to the recovery of their past history, by neglecting to take any note of the statement, that it was not till after the earth had cooled down sufficiently to allow of the waters of the ocean resting on its surface, that those heavenly orbs appeared in their present form and brightness ? And may not the supporters of the theory of evolution have something to learn from the assertion that the creatures of the sea and the air took their origin in close connection with each other, while the beasts of the earth and man himself were reserved for another day ?

It would be easy to go through the first chapter of Genesis, and show how at every turn the most interesting problems

are suggested in every branch of science ; how the simple asking of the questions, under what necessary, or under what alternative, conditions must these things have taken place ? what is really involved or implied in this or that statement ? leads to the most curious and unexpected results. If it be a fact, as is so often asserted, that Scripture was not written to teach men scientific truth, it is none the less a fact that of all the books that ever were written there is none that stirs so powerfully the scientific instinct in man, and drives him by the force of what it reveals to search in every direction into the things that still remain hidden. I am persuaded that many a man who treats the first and second chapters of Genesis as mythical, or as the result of the crude speculations of the science or want of science of an early and child-like period, if he would only lay aside for awhile his prejudices, and study the record they contain with an honest and impartial attention, would say before long, "whatever be the meaning of this, it has none of the marks of a myth, it is no product of the simple science of an age inexperienced in the pursuit of physical knowledge ; it contains statements which could not possibly have occurred to an ancient writer who had nothing to depend upon but his own speculations or those of his contemporaries."

"But," it may be said, "do not the theories of modern science, which teach that all the living beauty and variety we now behold has been evolved by natural processes from low and simple forms, do away with the possibility of paying serious attention to any record of creation ? Do they not profess to show how all things have come into being without the aid of a rational Creator ?" Surely of all the strange delusions which from time to time becloud the minds of clever men, this is one of the strangest. It very much resembles the mistake of an ignorant person who, when he witnessed the discharge of a splendid

firework, displaying an elaborate system of moving and variegated light, should exclaim that some ingenious man must be producing that glorious spectacle; but by-and-by being shown a common ugly-looking case, and told how, at the touch of a spark, all the glory he had beheld evolved itself out of it, should consider that this disposed of the whole matter, and that there was no longer any room left for thinking of a skilful fabricator. I am shown a little bit of jelly-like vegetable matter, which appears in the most powerful microscope that can be made to be exactly the same throughout, and I am told that from some such beginning as this, has issued all the life, vegetable and animal, with all its countless varieties of forms, and all the endless beauty and marvellous contrivance, which I now see around me. But instead of saying "now there is no room for a Creator," it seems to me that the only reasonable thought is, "here is a new and greater wonder added to all those which I perceived before; how marvellous must He be Who shut up all these glorious potentialities into this common bit of matter; and that so hiddenly that no instrument devised by man can reveal the slightest prophecy of their forthcoming." No more can come out of anything than that which is first in it. And if there really sprang up from a little bit of protoplasm, consciousness, will, memory, sense of duty, intelligent choice and effort, profoundest thought, and subtlest reasoning and contrivance,—in that case all these capacities were there, however hidden, and I adore the glory of Him Who compressed them all into that miniature world, with an unspeakable adoration.

"But at all events," it may be said, "if this be so, however much you may retain your belief in a Creator, you cannot possibly any longer attribute much value to the Mosaic account of the creation." I have already said enough to show how fully I myself believe in the inspiration, and therefore in the truthfulness of that account, and how little I think

it necessary for anyone to abandon that belief because of difficulties that may appear in the way of reconciling its statements with even well-established facts of modern science. Still, partly for the sake of those to whom such difficulties are stumbling-blocks, either because they have not yet attained any firm belief of the inspiration of Holy Writ, or because they are sorely tempted to abandon the faith in which they have been brought up ; partly in order to assist those who are doubtful as to the amount of divine guidance which that word 'inspiration' may imply ; partly with a view of removing the repugnance felt by many devout persons towards the far-reaching speculations of modern science ; and finally in the hope of creating a scientific interest in the minds of some few, whether scholars or physicists, in those earlier chapters of the Bible which of late have been far more discussed and fought over than diligently studied—I will try to put forward a suggestion with regard to the real meaning of the six days' creation, which, if it be not deemed satisfactory in itself, may yet have the effect of leading others to pay serious attention to the subject, and help them to arrive at a better mode of regarding the whole question.

Let me begin, then, by stating as simply as I can the exact nature of the difficulties which it seems to me have to be encountered. Geology reveals a long series of distinct plants and animals—man being in any case among the last to appear—so arranged with regard to one another that they could not possibly have been contemporaneous, yet which coming in succession must—if individual plants and animals passed lives in any way resembling those of similar existences now—have occupied periods measured, not by thousands, but by millions of years. So that it becomes almost inconceivable either that the earth could have been utterly waste and lifeless till a few days before the coming of man ; or that the whole vegetable world could have been originated before a single

animal was in existence, or that the entire vegetable kingdom could have made its appearance in one day, and the animal creation, including man, in two days more.

Judging from such data as have been already acquired, we must pronounce it to be extremely improbable that all the organic creation should have been completed in visible co-existence within the limits of time set down in the first chapter of Genesis; and very doubtful, to say the least, whether the order of events could have been such in every respect as seems to be there indicated. To this it must be added, that discoveries have been made of late years in more than one line of investigation, which seem to carry back the existence of man, or of some creature sufficiently like man to be capable of fabricating rude instruments, to a much earlier period than had previously been supposed possible; and although there still appear to be points at which error may have crept in as regards the remoteness of the discovered traces of such human-like agency, yet those who have a right to be heard on the question assert with confidence that the commencement of our race must be looked for, not, as the Bible seems to indicate, six thousand years at the most before the coming of CHRIST, but some hundreds of centuries earlier. And finally the difficulty appears at first sight to be still further complicated if any weight be given to those theories of evolution, which regard the different orders of living things not as separate and instantaneous creations, but as developments, going on through immense periods of time, from lower and simpler forms of life.

At the time when the believers in the inspiration of the Bible were first obliged to face some of the facts which seem inconsistent with the sacred record, there appeared to be a simple and satisfactory method of escaping from the difficulty. That creation which began with the words, "GOD said, let there be light," presupposes a state of things already existing; there

was already the earth empty and waste, with deep waters covering its surface. Might not this condition be the termination of the vast periods revealed by geology? Might not the present world have been built upon the ruins of a former creation?

It is obvious at once that this supposition is not consistent with the more recent scientific speculations—those relating to the supposed antiquity of man, and the gradual evolution of present living forms from those which existed in the past geological ages. But independently of these later difficulties, this explanation was never really tenable, except perhaps for a short time before the precise facts of the case had been fully ascertained. The most cursory examination of the fossil remains shows that the animals to which they belonged lived for the most part in conditions exactly similar to those of which the creation is described in the first chapter of Genesis. They saw with eyes, therefore there was already light. They breathed, therefore there was already an atmosphere. They were, some marine, and some terrestrial, therefore there was a division of land and water. The plants in like manner were, many of them, such as require sunlight, air, and dry land, for their production and support. So that if the present earth was built upon the ruins of a former world, it would seem that the Almighty had utterly destroyed one order of things, for the purpose of creating another almost precisely similar. And further, although most of the higher forms of life now existing were found, like man himself, to be comparatively recent, so that they might be conceived to have been created contemporaneously with him, yet even of these some appeared to have preceded him by a long period instead of a single day; while among creatures of a lower organization many were discovered which had evidently existed during a considerable portion of the geological ages, and which are still existing at the present time. In reference to these, again, it would be

necessary to suppose that species had been exterminated for the purpose of producing the preliminary chaos, although the very same species were needed in the new order of things, and had therefore to be re-created.

Considerations such as these by-and-by drove the defenders of Scripture to attempt another explanation. It was asserted that the six days of creation need not mean days such as we now know, but might be understood to denote immense periods of time, sufficient for all the requirements of geology or any other science.

Here again it is plain that the proposed interpretation does not meet the difficulty of the alleged antiquity of the human race. Whatever may be the case with the other animals, the scriptural narrative seems to carry on the chronology of man's existence upon earth, by a succession of distinct dates, from the day of his creation down to historic times. There may be a difference of a thousand years or so in the calculations derived from different ancient versions of the Bible ; but the date of man's creation as drawn from this source cannot apparently be thrown back further than five or six thousand years before the coming of our LORD ; and such a distance of time is insufficient to satisfy the demands of modern science.

But even putting this out of the question, the proposed explanation is in many ways extremely unsatisfactory and objectionable. The Hebrew word for "day" admits of considerable latitude of meaning. Setting aside the senses which attach to it only in its plural form, with which we are not now concerned, we find the following uses of the word :

a. It denotes any one period of daylight, a "day" as opposed to night ; or, to speak scientifically, the time during which the sun remains above the horizon at any particular part of the earth's surface. If the supposition of Gesenius be correct, that

the word was derived from a root signifying "heat," this would be its first and proper meaning.

b. It came however very naturally to be applied to the time made up of one "day" in the former sense and the preceding or succeeding night; in other words, the interval between one sunrise or one sunset and the next, or more accurately, the period of one entire revolution of the earth on its axis—what we call a "day of twenty-four hours." This is evidently the meaning in the first part, at any rate, of the fourth commandment.

These are the ordinary senses of the word, but the following additional uses occur, the references for which may be found in Gesenius's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, edited by Dr. Tregelles, at p. 341:

c. It is employed in a number of special phrases where we use the word "time:" such as "this day," denoting "at the present time;" "in that day," denoting "at that time;" "in the day that," denoting "at the time when." Again, "the day" of any one may express the time, either of his deliverance and prosperity, or of his distress and downfall: and similarly, "the day of the LORD" and "that day" are used to signify times of divine judgment.

It is from this usage of the word that some Hebrew scholars and lexicographers, and many expositors of Holy Scripture, have derived the idea of its denoting an indefinite "period of time." But if any one will look carefully into the above phrases, he will discern that the thought which they all involve, and by which they are connected, is that of a crisis, special occasion, or particular conjuncture. It is not the *length* of the time occupied by what is spoken of, that the writer has in his mind when he uses the word "day," but the *position* in time, or the *critical importance* of the event to which it refers. In other words, this use of "day" is not *extensive*, but *intensive*; and to argue from it that the Hebrew word may

be employed to denote a "period of time" of any length, is most unsafe and illogical. The fallacy of the assumption may be shown by an illustration which it requires no knowledge of Hebrew to understand. It happens that we use the English word "day" in two or three phrases precisely similar to those of which instances have been given from the Hebrew. We speak of the state of opinion at the present "day," meaning "at the present time;" and in like manner we talk of people who are now prominent, as men of the "day." Again, we say of a person that his "day" is over, or that he has had his "day;" implying that he has reached and passed the acme of his fame or success. It is plain that, in these cases, "day" does not mean a space of twenty-four hours; and also that the state of things expressed by it, e. g. the culminating period of a man's success, may last for a considerable time. But who would ever argue from this, that by the word "day" in an English writer might be understood an "indefinite period?" Yet these are the arguments which are used to show that the corresponding Hebrew word admits of this sense. The truth is, this meaning was invented to meet the supposed exigencies of the first chapter of Genesis, and there is no authority whatever for it anywhere else. But it is a rule of good sense, no less than of sound scholarship, that no new meaning of a word shall be devised to suit a particular passage, unless all the senses which undoubtedly belong to it are plainly and certainly inadmissible. Putting then out of the question the prophetic use of a "day" for a "year," which has no place in historical narration, let us see whether one or other of the ordinary senses of the word is not applicable to the seven "days" of the first chapter of Genesis.

The exact translation of the sentence at the end of verse 5 is, "And evening happened, and morning happened—day one." In trying to understand this we must begin by declining to pay any attention to metaphorical meanings which

have been suggested for "morning" and "evening," as well as for "day," since they are clearly out of place in such a narrative. The first sense then which belongs to "day"—"day" as opposed to night, although it is evidently the one intended in the preceding words, "GOD called the light day," has never, I believe, been proposed in the latter part of the verse: its adoption would not remove any difficulty, and is precluded by the order of the words, which indicates that "morning" came at the *end* of the period signified.

Again, none of the usages by which "day" denotes a special time or season are applicable in this case. The words of Genesis ii. 4, "in the day that the LORD GOD made the earth," mean "at the time when the LORD GOD made," or "had made," "the earth:" but in the present instance the form of the sentence excludes this and all similar meanings. So too the use of "day" to denote a crisis or special conjuncture, in the history of a person or a nation, is inadmissible in the passage we are considering; not merely because such a use is poetical or prophetic, but also because it is excluded by the mention of "evening" and "morning." For although, by an intelligible extension of the meaning of these words, we might perhaps get this sense out of the passage—"the close of a period of light happened, and then the close of a period of darkness happened, constituting the first great crisis in the work of creation," yet such a sense is shut out by other considerations. It must be remembered that the periods in question, if they are to be of any use in overcoming the geological difficulties of the subject, must be immensely long, consisting of tens of thousands of years. But, if so, the statement of verse 13 would run thus—"And the close of an immense interval of light happened, and the close of an immense interval of darkness happened, constituting the third great crisis of creation." Now although, on the one hand, an immense period of light might possibly

be made to remove one difficulty, by providing the time required, according to the successions of vegetation revealed in the geological strata, for the production of grass, herb, and tree, as recorded in the preceding verse ; yet, on the other hand, the subsequent vast interval of darkness would introduce a fresh difficulty of still greater magnitude ; because any very long-continued absence of light would have annihilated all the ordinary forms of vegetable life, and the crisis of their birth would have been that also of their destruction. Moreover, if we are to regard the teachings of geology at all, we must bear in mind the fact that these teachings deny the occurrence of any such crises as those imagined, and declare that one order of creation must have faded away into another by continuous and almost imperceptible gradations.

It only remains, then, to see whether there is any valid objection to the employment in this passage of the remaining sense of the word "day"—that by which it denotes a day of twenty-four hours, or, in other words, the time occupied by one entire revolution of the earth on its axis. This is the sense which the reference to the days of creation made in the fourth commandment naturally suggests, if it does not absolutely require : it is the sense too which for the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh "days," after GOD had appointed the sun to rule over the day, seems almost unavoidable. The only question therefore is, whether there was anything in the state of the world during the three first "days" which renders this meaning inadmissible. What then are the facts of the case ? It is almost demonstrable that the earth at the time referred to, when it had become solid enough to sustain an ocean of deep waters, must have been revolving on its axis at a rate not appreciably different from that at which it turns at present ; and it is most probable that the source of light was already sufficiently concentrated to allow of the succession of day and night being produced then, as it is now, by means of that

revolution. But even supposing that the changes of evening and morning were brought about for the first three days by some different method, there is nothing unreasonable in thinking that the Almighty would choose to give uniformity to the week of creation, by arranging that the periods of light and darkness should be of the same length for those days, as they would be when the sun was fully formed.

On these grounds, which might be enlarged and fortified to almost any extent, I do not hesitate to say that reverence for the truth of GOD'S Word obliges us, in spite of all scientific difficulties, to take the words "day," "evening," and "morning," in their ordinary senses ; and I venture to call upon the reader to reject all schemes of interpretation founded upon the opposite principle, even though they originated with so great a theologian as S. Augustine, and were countenanced by so great a scholar as the late Dr. McCaul.

There are those who, when the inadequacy of these explanations is pressed upon them, think it sufficient to fall back upon the vague assertion that "the Bible is not meant to teach science." It is difficult to see upon what grounds this assertion rests. Holy Scripture constantly supplies information on points of scientific interest having no apparent bearing upon morality, religion, or theology ; as for instance when it gives the precise times of the rising and subsidence of the Noachian deluge, and an accurate measure of the greatest height of the waters ; and in so doing it would seem to teach, and be meant to teach, science. But however that may be, it is a sufficient answer to the statement that the Bible is not intended to teach scientific truth, to say that at any rate it can hardly have been intended to teach unscientific falsehood. Surely GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT could have told men that GOD is the Maker and Ruler of all things, that He made all things good, that He created man in His Own Image to be the head and lord of this terrestrial system, and that He wished the

seventh day to be kept holy, without stating that all things were made in six days, if such was not the fact, and that they came into existence about six or eight thousand years ago, if that was utterly untrue.

Let us, then, see whether there is not a way of looking at the whole subject of creation—a way suggested by Scripture itself and by common sense, which may perhaps in due time furnish us with a method of escaping from all these difficulties.

We say, that “in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is ;” and at first sight the statement appears to be perfectly simple. But as soon as we fix our attention on any one particular thing now existing, we find that it requires a little consideration to determine what it is exactly that we mean by the statement. If I look at the heaven, I know that not a cloud I see there, not a particle of unseen watery vapour, and perhaps not a molecule of the atmosphere that supports the cloud and the vapour, is the same now, or occupies the same place as when GOD’S Word was first fulfilled, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” If I turn my eyes downwards, there are the earth and the sea ; but the distribution of land and water, and the situation, shape, and elevation, of mountain, valley, and plain, are totally different from what they were when the waters were first gathered together in one place, and the dry land appeared. Innumerable mutations have altered all these things in the lapse of ages : so that the only sense in which we can truly say, that GOD made in the six days all that we now behold, is this—that He then made an arrangement of materials, laws, and forces, which He knew would in due time produce the heaven and earth and sea, on which we now gaze. But if this is what we must understand by the statement that GOD made all these things at the first, namely

that He established something then, out of which all the things which we now behold would in the course of ages take their rise, then it seems to follow that, even if we go back to the time when heaven and earth and sea first assumed an appearance similar to that with which we are acquainted, there is no need for us to suppose that time to have been the day of their creation. Rather that day must be looked for still further back, when GOD established the laws and forces of which that first phase of heaven, or earth, or sea, would—after how long a time we know not—be the intended and foreseen result.

This modification of our idea of the six days' work seems inevitable, even when we confine our attention to merely material things; but the necessity for making it appears to be increased tenfold as soon as we take into consideration the various forms of life. Evidently not an individual plant, animal, or person now to be found upon the earth came into visible being, or was called into any such existence as it at this moment enjoys, on the days of which it is written, that in them the earth brought forth grass and herb, and tree, or that GOD created every living thing that moveth which the waters brought forth abundantly, or that He made beast and cattle and creeping thing, or created Man in His own image. If, therefore, they were made on those days, it could only be in the sense of something being then formed, or established, or arranged, which would in due time lead to their production. But if we are obliged to allow this in the case of all the individual members of the different kingdoms after the first progenitors of existing species, there can surely be no further difficulty in allowing it in the case of those first progenitors themselves; of them too it is conceivable that their creation on the third, fifth, or sixth day, was simply the arrangement of those elements and setting to work of those forces, from which at last they would inevitably spring.

Gentle reader, you have probably some plant in your garden or conservatory, or on your window sill, in the growth of which you take a special interest. I trust that you believe, as firmly as I do, that a loving GOD has made that plant for your delight. Let us, then, stand for a few moments before it, while I ask you to consider the question, *When* did He make it? If you reply, "on the third day of Creation," you will see at once that it could only have been made then in the form of some minute germ or gemmule, or other remote beginning of life, which, after going through a long line of preceding plants, at last came forth in the individual specimen at which you are now looking. And if this was the mode of creation of this particular individual, it is at least possible that the creation of the first unit of the species to which it belongs may have taken place in no other fashion.

But if, in order to avoid this inference, you say that your plant may have been created since that first making of the species, at what point will you put this more recent act of creation? Did it take place when the seed or cutting from which your flower sprang was first planted in the ground? Surely what occurred then was merely the starting of a fresh growth, not the making of a new creature. Was it, then, when the seed or cutting first began to be formed that the new plant was created?—but that, too, was merely a process of growth—the existing life of the parent plant moulding existing materials. Do what you will, you will find it impossible to fix any satisfactory date for the creation of your plant later than the day when GOD said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit." And, indeed, Scripture itself will not allow you to seek for any other creation. For it says that on the sixth day "The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them," and with the coming of the seventh day "GOD ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the

seventh day." But if the production of every fresh individual of a race is an act of creation, then GOD only ended His work, and rested that one day, in order to begin it again the day after, and continue it ever since. This does not look like finishing the host of heaven and earth, or ending His work. But, in fact, the seventh day's rest itself becomes inexplicable on this supposition: for not only would all the races of tiny creatures, whose life only lasts for a few hours, have died out, unless preserved by a miracle, if no successors were created for them during that one whole day of rest, but instead of the Sabbath having been instituted, as the Scripture clearly represents, because GOD'S work came to an end on that day, GOD must have arbitrarily stopped His work of creation for one day for the purpose of instituting the Sabbath; a thing which, it may be further observed, He has, on the supposition in question, never done since for the purpose of keeping it.

It results, then, that the Creation described in the first chapter of Genesis was not the making merely of the first progenitors of the different races there spoken of, but of every individual of those races from the first to the very last. And this conclusion, if it needs to be enforced, is strengthened by what is said respecting the creation of man, which must surely show what is to be understood in every other case. GOD said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let *them* have dominion;" where the sudden change to the plural shews that by "man" is meant not Adam, but the whole human race. So that here comes in again the inference, that since all the rest of that race could only have been made then by some beginning of life being formed, out of which, by virtue of the forces contained in it, and the laws impressed upon it, all the successive individuals would, as time went on, arise, Adam himself also may have been created at that time in no other way. In other words, as there has been an immense process to be gone through, and a great lapse of ages since

the sixth day, before any of my readers came into visible existence, so it may have been that it was only after a long progression, and at a great distance of time from the day on which he was created, that Adam at last trod the earth, and man, made in the "Image of GOD," assumed his proper place in the universe. And the same reasoning applies to nearly all the acts of Creation recorded in the first chapter of Genesis ; with the exception, perhaps, of the division of the light from the darkness—which it would seem, from the nature of the case, must have taken place between the morning and the evening of the first day—whatever is there said to have been made, or done, need not have appeared in its perfect and complete form till long afterwards ; the interval of time having been occupied in the processes then set up working themselves out to their intended results.

But it may still be said, that, although such an idea of creation is conceivable, and although in the case of the succeeding members of any race of living things it may be necessary, yet, as regards the original progenitors of the different races, it can hardly be made to agree with the Scriptural narrative. If the account had merely been, "GOD said, Let Us make man in Our Image," there would have been no difficulty in supposing that ages might have elapsed before the result of that determination displayed itself. But the sacred record goes on to state, "So GOD created man in His own Image: . . . male and female created He them; and GOD blessed them; . . . and GOD said, Behold, I have given you every herb." Does not this require us to believe that Adam and Eve appeared in visible existence before the close of the sixth day? This might be our first idea, but I have already given a reason for supposing that this presumption cannot be maintained. The words are, "GOD said, Let Us make man in Our Image after Our likeness: and let *them* have dominion." "Man," then, here is

not Adam, but the whole human race ; and obviously, when it is said directly afterwards, "So GOD created man in His Own Image, in the Image of GOD created He him ; male and female created He them," He must be understood as having carried out the design previously announced. And therefore, here too, "man" denotes the whole race, and "male" and "female" are not Adam and Eve, but all the individual members of the two sexes from them down to the end of time. So, too, the grant of dominion, fertility, and sustenance is made to the whole human race : and that it is not necessary to suppose that such words could only be addressed to those who were able to hear and understand them, is shown by the fact that GOD had just before blessed the fishes and the birds, "Saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth."

That which GOD has determined to execute, and has set at work the means to bring about, is as truly present to Him, as it is to us when it has been accomplished before our eyes ; He can already pronounce it to be good or bad, and declare its properties or assign its prerogatives. We have a striking instance of this divine style of treating that which has been provided for as if it were actually done, in the threat given to our first parent, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We know that Adam did eat of the forbidden tree, and yet lived for at least nine hundred years after. But there was no mistake in the awful warning. At the moment when Adam sinned, the germ of death entered the human frame. The thing was done, the result certain ; and the lapse of a thousand years before it worked itself out, made no difference in the Divine estimation. For it must be remembered, that there is this distinction between the works of GOD and those of man ; that when we have made every arrangement, and set at work all the requisite means, for bringing about a desired end, we never can be certain that our purpose

will not be defeated, or that the result will not disappoint our expectations. But with Him there is no such uncertainty; He takes into account every disturbing influence, and works into his designs every opposing force. Therefore, when he speaks, it is done, and when He commands, it stands fast: although for ages after no eye but His own may discern the intended result. Therefore, too, in His Word, He "calletH those things which be not as though they were," speaking of His SON as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" saying to Abraham, "Unto thy seed have I given this land," when as yet he had no child, and the land was in the hand of strangers; and asking by His prophet, "Hast thou not heard long ago how I did it, and of ancient times that I formed it," when it was only just now that He had actually brought it to pass. Hence it is that where it is written, "GOD said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the tree yielding fruit," it is added, "and it was so; and the earth brought forth grass, and the herb yielding seed . . . , and the tree yielding fruit . . . and GOD saw that it was good:" though it may have been ages from that time before any eye but His saw the earth covered with vegetation.

I trust that the thoughtful reader has now sufficiently grasped the idea of creation which I have tried to present to his mind; an idea which takes in the entire range of living things from the beginning to the end, with all their possible mutations, transformations, and developments, from the moment that the first germ of life appeared upon this globe to the accomplishment of that regeneration of all things, which surely must have been the phase of His creation that stood out most prominently before the eye of GOD, when He "saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." According to this idea, they who stand at any time upon the *earth may say* with perfect truth of the things around them,

as then existing, "GOD made all these at the first;" because He then made or did that of which these are the prepared, predetermined, and forenamed results. And the lapse of time, whether long or short, between the actual appearance of the named and contemplated result and the institution of the means for its production, forms no element in the matter; some fruits of each divine work may have become apparent to angelic eyes at the instant it was accomplished, while some may never see the light till the day when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And I wish it especially to be noticed that this view of the matter has not been arrived at at all in the interest of science, but as a conclusion from the most obvious facts of existence, and the simplest statements of Holy Scripture. You, my reader, were certainly made, according to the Scriptures, on the sixth day of creation; both because GOD finished His work at the end of that day, and rested from it, and also because He spoke of that which He was going to do, when He made man, as the making of the entire race. Contemplate, therefore, all the transformations that you must have undergone from that day to the present, and those which must still befall you up to the hour when you shall assume your glorified form and be indeed "very good;" and then take yourself as a sample of the whole six days' creation, and you can hardly fail to feel the force, even if you are unable to acknowledge the necessity, of the conception for which I have been pleading.

Before, however, we attempt to enunciate that conception in the form of an exact definition, we must notice another principle that should be taken into account, in order to render it complete. It is evident that the production of individuals, whether vegetable or animal, depends not only on the existence of certain forces and laws by which they are built up, but also on the circumstances being such that those forces

and laws have an opportunity of coming into action ; and these circumstances, it will be found, generally involve motions of which the forces in themselves are incapable. The seed from which a new plant is to spring must be carried by the force of gravity, or by the wind, or by a bird, or by man, to a soil favourable to its growth.. One man divides a polype, or cuts and plants a slip, and a new animal or plant results. Another keeps beasts, and, for his own purposes, regulates the production of their offspring ; often bringing into existence individual animals, which certainly would never have come into being without his intervention. And this is still more obviously true of the offspring of man himself. Now no one would say in these cases that the plants, animalcules, beasts, or men, which thus originated, were created by the earth's attraction, or by the wind, bird, or man whose action was necessary for their production. We must allow, then, that they were potentially in existence before, although favouring circumstances were needed in order to bring them into visible separate being. And this leads us to notice, in passing, that there must be innumerable hosts of things which have this potential existence—which were as really created at the beginning as their more fortunate competitors, and yet, as a matter of fact, never see the light.

But if, as certainly is the case, there has thus come across the path of the development of things from their constituent forces the interference, not only of lifeless agents, but also of insect, bird, beast, and man, can we reasonably stop here ? Is it not plainly unphilosophical to deny that yet higher intelligences may possibly have modified the course of that development, both before and since man came upon the scene ? It may turn out that, when science has catalogued all the forces and processes by which things have passed from previous states to the forms in which we now perceive them, *the traces of that higher interference may become just as*

plain, as the hand of man is now in the pedigree of some of the races of plants, birds, and cattle. Yet this higher intervention could no more be said to create the things to the production of which it led than man can be said to have created the curious varieties of pigeon or dog to which his skill in the art of rearing has given rise.

If, then, we include under the comprehensive term "favouring circumstances" all intervention, whether physical, animal, human, angelic, Divine, or if there be any other, which merely enables existing forces to come into play, and produce effects in accordance with their laws of action, and if we remember what has previously been said as to the time that may elapse between the creation of a thing and its coming into sensible existence, we finally get this idea of creation, or this account of the six days' work: "When GOD is spoken of as having created a thing on a particular day, He is to be understood as having on that day made those capacities, established those forces, and instituted those laws which, being called into play by circumstances favourable to their action, would in due time lead to its production."

It may be noticed by the attentive reader that in this definition nothing is said of the creation of materials, and indeed he may have observed that I have, throughout this essay, almost entirely avoided all reference to the origin of material elements. The reason of this is twofold.

In the first place, it must be remembered, as we have had occasion to remark before, that the six days' creation is not spoken of as being the commencement of this terrestrial globe. When the work began which ended with the seventh day, there was already in existence the earth, empty and waste, and the waters enveloping its surface. It would seem likely, therefore, that all the material elements had already been formed before the creation with which we are immediately concerned was initiated. If so, it would appear that the intro-

duction of new modes of action and combination, new properties, new qualities, amid existing materials, was what constituted the essence of the creation recorded in the first chapter of Genesis; and this will be sufficiently described as the establishment of new forces and the institutions of new laws.

Still it would not be safe to assert positively that no new element was called into being in the course of the six days' work. It remains, therefore, to observe that the constituent elements themselves are, according to all the means we have of becoming acquainted with them, simply arrangements and combinations of force. Take, for instance, a piece of gold. You see it to be of a yellow colour. This merely shows that there are forces there so regulated as to beat off such waves of the light-bearing ether, which fills all space, as fall upon them, in undulations of that particular length which causes the sensation to us of the colour which we name yellow. There is, as it were, an island of force, against which the waves of the luminiferous ocean are for ever dashing, to be broken up into receding undulations, some of which enter the eye of the beholder, and excite in him the ideas both of the form and the colour of the gold. Again, if you press the metal with your finger, you experience a feeling which only denotes that some force is repelling that excited by the effort of your will. If you hold it in your hand, you become conscious of its weight, which is nothing but a force pushing your hand down towards the earth. You may chance at the same time to feel that it is hot or cold. This merely means that there are forces in it which impart more or less of motion to the molecules of your flesh or nerves, or of any other substance with which it is brought in contact. And so you may go through all its properties; and if you know enough of science to see what each of them implies, you will find there is nothing *there but force*—something, that is, which causes or changes,

or tends to cause or change, motion in the things which come within the range of its influence. You may, if you please, imagine that all these forces reside in something which you call the substance of the metal. But it is simpler to say that the forces themselves are the substance ; that the metal is nothing but a bundle of force, differing from other elements by the laws which regulate its action. Nor must it be imagined that this idea destroys the reality of matter. Nothing can be more real and substantial than that which causes motion, or resists and modifies it ; and in asserting that all matter is force, we do not reduce it to a shadowy and intangible existence, but rather give form and substance to that which was before an unrealized and indefinite conception. I shall have something to say at the conclusion of this essay as to the nature of force itself ; and, in the meantime, I will ask the reader to meditate a little upon this wondrous agency, and especially to notice that he himself has the power of originating and controlling it, and that therefore he himself is distinct from, and superior to, the matter which it constitutes.

Even then supposing that new materials were made at the time we are considering, the definition of creation that has been laid down is sufficient ; because those materials were nothing else than new forces with the laws to which they were subjected. When however we come to think of the creation of life we must introduce the idea of the other term contained in our definition, namely, " capacities ;" because here we have, in all the higher vital forms, not only force, but that which exerts force at its pleasure, and in addition experiences sensation ; the living creature is a bundle of capacities for sensation and exertion, just as the lifeless element is a bundle of forces. The consciousness of separate individuality is itself one of the sensations which constitute the individual ; and the capacity for such a consciousness is the beginning of his

existence. Thus capacities and forces, and the laws according to which those capacities are realized and those forces act, seem to form the ultimate subjects of creation.

But while I thus endeavour to show that the definition is sufficient, that it says enough, I must also guard against a possible idea that it says too much, that the six days' creation may have been something less than what my statement represents it to have been. When it is said that all material things had probably been called into existence before the six days' work began, the thought is not unlikely to occur that that work may have been nothing more than a re-arrangement of elements already existing. Fresh combinations, it may be said, wrought out in the laboratory of the cooling globe, fresh mechanical contrivances devised in that busy workshop, are all that are implied in those effects which are said to have been brought about in the course of the great six days. The gases which compose the atmosphere were already formed, and needed but to be disengaged in order to constitute that firmament whose surface the birds of the heaven were to skim, and above which the clouds containing the superfluous waters were to float. It needed but a little manipulation of the still half-molten masses lying beneath the thin crust of earth, to cause those elevations and depressions of the land which would oblige the waters to run off into their appointed place. And then the evolution of life in the slimy shallows, and the rich lands now first emerging from the deep, was but an act of divine chemistry making skilful use of forces and properties already existing, to form new combinations never seen before on earth.

This idea is at the first glance a tempting one, and yet all true insight into the meaning of the divine record forbids us to be content with it. Ever the question returns, from what was it that GOD rested on the seventh day? Or, in other words, what was it that constituted the peculiar significance

Of the previous six days' work in the annals of this earth and of the universe? From such work as that just now alleged to be sufficient there has never been any rest. New arrangements and fresh combinations of existing elements, according to existing laws and properties, are ever going on, alike in the physical course of nature, and by the intervention of man. They constitute indeed those "favouring circumstances" through which individual life is incessantly being brought into the world. But if, on the one hand, we cannot certainly affirm the formation of any new element in the six days of creation, and, on the other, cannot be satisfied with assigning to those days mere rearrangements of existing materials, there seems nothing left but to suppose that at that time fresh capacities, forces, and laws were introduced among those already at work, or were impressed upon elements already called into existence.

To give an instance of what I mean, I do not suppose that the production of light, assuming it to have involved a cosmical and not merely a terrestrial change, depended on the creation of the element or elements of which the light-bearing medium is composed; nor yet on the other hand upon those elements being then, by mechanical and chemical reactions, brought into the required combination and the interstellar position. Rather I should consider that, by a permanent alteration in the nature of the forces composing it, the luminiferous ether then first became capable of transmitting those vibrations which produce the effect which we call light; having hitherto been able to convey only those which constitute dark heat. I do not offer this as an exact account of what actually occurred, but as an illustration of the kind of work which seems to have been done during the six days of creation. To take another example: the initiation of vegetable life on the third day probably did not require the formation of any new material. And yet the putting together of existing elements to form an organic substance, even if that be possible where

nothing but chemical and mechanical forces are available for the purpose, would not answer the conditions of the problem. There are organic compounds which neither take nutriment into themselves, nor are capable any longer of growing, but we call them dead. There must have been introduced into existing forces, or impressed upon existing materials, forces and laws of life, before the most infinitesimal beginning of a living vegetable organism could ever have taken its origin.

I trust that I have sufficiently defined and explained the idea, drawn originally from other than scientific grounds, of what creation really means in Scriptural language. Let us now proceed to try what light the conception thus gained will throw upon the supposed failure of Revelation to meet the requirements of modern science. The following, then, appear to be some of the obvious results of this new method of regarding the subject :

1. All excuse is taken away for imagining that six days, such as we ordinarily mean when we speak of days, would be insufficient for the accomplishment of the work recorded to have been done in them. The commencement of a new capacity, the setting up of the action of an entirely new force, the beginning of the dominion of an entirely new law, must according to any notion we can form be instantaneous. Days may have been assigned, but moments, as far as we can see, would have been sufficient, for all that is narrated as having been done in the sacred week of the creation. This is so evident, that we must seek for any explanation of the time allotted; not in the necessities of the case, but rather in the mysteries of the Divine Nature, or perhaps the need of displaying by degrees before angelic eyes the wondrous beginnings from which a world of light and life was to spring.

2. And yet room is left for any lapse of time, any succession of vast periods, that geology or any other science may

demand. How far back in the depths of eternity that week of strange significance may lie, we have no means of determining. The only limit is that this globe, once a revolving chaos of incandescent fluids and vapours, had already cooled down into a solid mass, with the waters resting on its surface. The great gap which Chalmers and his followers believed to exist in the scriptural narrative was really there. Only it came not as they placed it, after the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, but after the third verse of the second chapter; not before, but after, the six days' work and the seventh day of rest that followed it. There, as they who have talked about there being two contradictory accounts of the creation have dimly seen, the language itself of the Sacred Word indicates a new starting-point; the formula, "These are the generations" of the heavens and the earth, referring here, as everywhere else in the book of Genesis, to that which follows it, and denoting in this place, as always elsewhere, a fresh point of departure in the narrative.¹ So that there is room for an interval of

¹ The punctuation and translation of Genesis ii. v. 4, 5, are alike uncertain; those which I have adopted are as follows: "This is the history of the heavens and of the earth when they were created. At the time when GOD had made the earth and the heavens, neither any plant of the field was yet in the earth, nor any herb of the field as yet grew; for the LORD GOD had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground." The translation "when GOD *had* made the heavens," which is that given by Gesenius, seems absolutely necessary, in order to make any sense of the passage. If we render the words, "at the time when GOD made the earth and the heavens," and understand them to refer to the six days' creation, the concluding words seem meaningless. At that time the reason why none of the herbs of the field could yet be made *was*, not that there was no man to till them and no rain to keep them alive, but that there was no place for them to grow, while the waters of the sea still covered the whole earth. On the very day that obstacle was removed, GOD said, "Let the earth bring forth grass and herb and tree."

It may be observed that in the statement that, till the time in question, "the LORD GOD had not caused it to rain upon the earth," we have a hint given of the change of climate which ushered in man and the coeval, or nearly coeval, plants and animals. There was plenty of rain in some portion at any rate of the geo-

any length that the far-reaching speculations of science may require, between the keeping of the first sabbath and the history of which the verse that follows is the commencement. During that time the potential creations of the six days were working themselves out in varied coexistence, mutation, and succession ; and man made in the image of GOD was still, if we may so express it, below the surface. But to use the same metaphor, he was making his way upwards ; and when all things are now ready for him to emerge, the Sacred Record again breaks its silence, and carries on the narrative, with more or less of continuity, down to historic times. All that is necessary for the vindication of the Scriptural Chronology is to understand, that, however long ago he was created, man only appeared in his perfect form some five thousand years before CHRIST came into the world.

3. And if it be regarded as an established fact, that human remains and traces of human sagacity are to be found in strata, which must have been inaccessible from the earth's surface long before the remotest period that can be assigned from Scripture for the coming of man, the principle laid down would seem to furnish a suggestion for a satisfactory mode of explanation. If the moulding of "the dust of the ground" into the perfect man was not a sudden leap but a long-continued progress, commencing from the sixth day and only ending when "GOD put the man whom He had formed" into the garden "which He had planted," it would appear likely that, at some advanced stage in the process, beings would arise the remains and works of which might be indistinguishable from those of rude or degenerate men. The man whose

logical ages, as the prints left by it in the hardened mud of the carboniferous epoch sufficiently prove. All that is here asserted is that, at the time and place where the flora and the fauna of the human period came into existence, there had been previously a long drought, which needed to be remedied before they could be produced to any purpose.

creation is recorded in Genesis is man made "in the image of GOD." Now it seems not improbable that what in man constitutes his likeness to GOD may be entirely in abeyance, without his losing altogether his human powers and sagacity, or ceasing in the eyes of science to be a human being. When we remember, then, that according to all analogy the highest step would be the last, it would appear probable that there was a time when the god-like element had not yet been developed in man, although in other respects he had attained almost his full powers. And if so, the supposed discrepancies between Scripture and science on this subject may all arise from their having assumed differing definitions of man, in accordance with the difference of their respective aims.

I cannot here resist the temptation of showing how exactly this suggestion with regard to pre-Adamite man falls in with a conclusion of modern science, enunciated by a distinguished naturalist, who arrives at his results from a starting-point totally different from my own, and whose views moreover in this instance are alluded to with approval by no less an authority than Mr. Darwin himself. ("Descent of Man," vol. i. p. 158; compare note, p. 137.) In quoting the following passage I do not in any way pledge myself to the particular theory on which it rests. It will be found, I believe, that any theory as to the mode in which the forces set at work in the sixth day of creation by degrees wrought out the perfect man, will lead to much the same conclusion. "Those great modifications," writes Mr. Wallace ("Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection," pp. 319, 320), "of structure and of external form, which resulted in the development of man out of some lower type of animal, must have occurred before his intellect had raised him above the condition of the brutes, at a period when he was gregarious, but scarcely social, with a mind perceptive but not reflective, ere any *sense of right* or *feeling of sympathy* had been developed in him." In other

words the ancestor of man acquired a completely human form we know not how long before he was stamped with the image and likeness of GOD.

It is only fair to add that I should infer from other passages in his essays that Mr. Wallace would be inclined to place the change by which man finally became complete, at a much earlier period than any that can be assigned for the commencement of the Adamic race. But I think he would allow that the evidence on this subject is extremely incomplete ; and there are not a few arguments which seem to point rather to a late date for the entire completion of man's nature.

4. It would not be necessary, according to the principle of interpretation laid down, that the results contemplated in the Divine purpose should in all cases have made their appearance in the exact order in which they are said to have been created—in the exact order, that is, in which the process of their production was commenced. If, for instance, science should ever be able to demonstrate that there were living things in the sea at a time when the waters still covered the face of the whole earth, this would not be inconsistent with the statement that the arrangements which finally led to the division of land and water were made two days before those which finally led to the existence of marine animals. It would only show that the processes which ended in the latter result were more speedy than those which brought about the former. So too if it could be proved that not a plant could have appeared upon the earth until the sun had assumed its present condition, this would not militate against the assertion that grass, and herb, and tree, were made upon the third day, while the sun took his proper form only on the fourth. It would merely indicate that the new force, or mode of action in virtue of which the sun became constituted as we now see him, produced its full effect with greater rapidity than did that to which the plants and trees at last owed their birth.

In fact there is no arrangement of the order in which created things appeared that science may wish to adopt, for which our principle does not apparently leave full scope ; remembering only that the new forces which led to the bursting forth of light must, from the nature of the case, have produced their effect on the coming of the first day, and that the means employed for dividing the light from the darkness must have been fully developed at the beginning of the first night.

5. The view of creation which has been offered, while it does not require, or seek to establish, any one particular theory of the formation of things and animals—such as that of Natural Selection—leaves ample room for that or any other mode of regarding the subject which may hereafter become established. It even suggests and invites scientific investigation in various directions in which it may by-and-by prove very fruitful. Let us take two or three instances of the elasticity and likewise of the suggestiveness of the views which have been proposed.

A great controversy has for some time been going on among scientific men as to the possibility of living forms being evoked out of lifeless materials ; and the struggle is hardly likely to meet with any speedy termination. Now at first sight it might appear, as if every such notion was incompatible with a genuine belief in the creation of earthly life at the time of the great six days. If a chemist, it may be said, can call forth life by a suitable combination of materials and temperatures, a chance concurrence of fortunate circumstances may very easily have given rise to it at the first. But suppose that it is in consequence of what was done at the first that the chemist can now summon living forms into visible existence. It is quite possible, on the one hand, that the Almighty may have seen fit to attach the capacities and forces which constitute life only to certain special particles or groups of matter, and to those to which they should be transmitted from them

by propagation. And this view would suit the theory of those who deny that life can ever now arise except from life. But on the other hand it is conceivable, that the new forces may have been infused by the work of the six days into matter generally, or into the entire range of particular forms of matter ; so that life may be always ready to appear, when conditions favourable to its production are satisfied. The believer in Revelation then need not feel himself under any necessity to treat the theory of Abiogenesis, as it is called, as a religious heresy, although physicists and physiologists seem disposed at present to regard it as a scientific one. This is an illustration of what I have called the elasticity of the proposed idea of creation : my next example will show both that and its suggestiveness.

We will imagine a follower of Darwin thinking it worth while to try how his theories will work out in the light of Holy Scripture, interpreted in the way for which I have contended. When he reads that on the third day GOD created the vegetable kingdom, he will probably not care to go further back than to some minute germ, from which, as he believes, every kind of plant—past, present, and to come—was destined to arise by a process of variation and natural selection. If I am right, there is nothing in the Sacred Record to militate against this belief ; but there is something to suggest for it a special, and perhaps welcome, form. The final result of the third day's work particularly mentioned, is the production of land plants—grass, herb, and tree ; but what was the habitat of the original germ ? Without venturing to answer such a question too positively, we have the following probabilities to guide us. According to the principles laid down, the second day of creation saw the establishment of those forces, which would in due time produce a cloud-supporting atmosphere ; while the first part of the third day was occupied in setting at work the energies which have ever since been

causing those inequalities of level upon which the existence of dry land depends. Having regard to the slowness with which these energies appear to work, and indeed to the patient deliberateness with which the Almighty usually sees fit to carry out His great designs, it would seem likely that when the germ of vegetable life was called into being on the third day, there was neither air in which it could fly, nor land upon which it could rest ; nothing but the expanse of ocean, with the changes of day and night passing over it. In all probability, then, that little nucleus which bore the future of the vegetable world was a thing of marine origin.

If we pass on, still regarding the matter from the same point of view, to the fourth day's work, we find ample range for speculation. The making of the creatures of the sea and air implies the coming in of new capacities and forces, of which the most important we may suppose would be the capacity—hidden and unrealized at first—for sensation or feeling. And now, in addition to all else to which such new capacities might be attached, there were the little germ previously created, and all the low forms of vegetable life to which—rapidly propagating itself with a mobility of variation appropriate to its simple organization—it had in the course of two days already given rise. Probably our Darwinian friend will think it most likely that the new energies were grafted on one of the existing vegetable germs, rather than on lifeless material now first organized to form the beginning of a higher life ; and then the sacred narrative apparently leaves him a choice of three lines for his surmises and investigations. He may suppose that there is no creational difference between the birds and marine animals, but that the former were developed out of the latter, by the processes of variation and natural selection. Or, secondly, he may consider that after one of the vegetable germs had been impressed with the new energies necessary for the evolution of the moving things of

the sea, and had then been left to propagate itself with variations for a few hours, some further power was added to one of the marine animalcules thus produced, fitting it to become the origin of the fowls of the air. Or lastly, he may conceive that the production of the marine creatures, and that of the birds, were initiated independently of each other, two different vegetable germs being employed as the foundations of these two distinct forms of life.

If we go on to the sixth day, we have now not only the vegetable, but what we may call the fish and the bird germs to choose from, as the stock upon which was grafted the powers which were to give rise to the life of beast of the earth, and cattle and creeping thing. This restriction only appears to be placed by the Scriptural narrative upon the Darwinian line of thought—that as the work of the fifth day shows that fishes and birds could be developed out of vegetable germs through the process of natural selection only by the coming in of fresh capacities, so now in the account of the sixth day it is implied that such a process would fail to produce beasts and cattle and creeping things out of marine animals or birds, and again man out of any of these preceding germs of life, unless it were reinforced by the introduction of some fresh energy at both stages of the ascent. And furthermore it may be noticed, that since the mandate of the sixth day with regard to the terrestrial creatures is, “Let the *earth* bring forth the living creature after his kind,” it would seem that we must suppose the germ from which the land animals finally sprung to have retained enough of its vegetable character to grow like a plant in the ground, up to the time when there was at length developed out of it a creature with distinctly animal characteristics.

But I must not allow it to be supposed that the follower of Darwin has any monopoly of the range afforded by the *proposed view of creation*. On the contrary, it seems likely that,

when that view is thoroughly grasped, it will suggest modes of thought which may compete for acceptance with the idea of development by Natural Selection. To show that such other conceptions are possible, I will give an imaginary sketch of the progress of life from the beginning ; not by any means putting it forth as a statement of what has actually occurred.

There are some plants the growth of which takes place in this wise—a root starts from a certain point, and runs for some distance in a nearly horizontal position under ground ; after awhile it sends up a shoot producing a small shrub ; it then goes on again, and by and by sends up another shoot, and so on. Now imagine that the root improved as it went on, so that at every fresh shoot it produced a plant of a higher order than the preceding one ; and suppose that the growth finally came to an end by the root running itself out in a plant of the most perfect organisation. Add the further idea that the root at different points put forth branch roots which behaved just like itself, sending up shoots from time to time, and at last running themselves out in the highest form of organisation possible in the direction to which their constant improvement tended, and we seem to have a conception for the progress of living existence on this earth which fulfils every essential condition.

Imagine then a hidden root of life, either immaterial or material ; but in the latter case capable of carrying its growth, if need be, through air or water as well as earth, and virtually indestructible by any adverse influence. Suppose this root to have taken its origin at the moment when GOD said, " Let the earth bring forth grass," and to have had fresh capacities infused into it when He gave the command, " Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature . . . and let fowl fly above the earth ;" and twice again, on the day when His word was uttered, " Let the earth bring forth the moving creature," and " Let us make man." Imagine that both the original

and the added powers and capacities did not all display their effects at once, but gradually unfolded themselves, the lower ones much more speedily than the higher ; so that there was a continual upward progression in the scale of life among the things which the root was capable of putting forth. The main line, or trunk, of the root would run on from the moment of its origin, till it finally emerged, and ceased all further hidden growth, in the production of the complete man ; and in this long course it would send forth, from time to time, into visible existence the first progenitors of those various species which lead by a natural line of ascent from the lowest living organism up to the perfect man. And at uncertain intervals there would spring from it branch-roots similar to itself, each sending up, now and again, new species tending continually towards some higher organisation, till it terminated at last in the most perfect form of life that could be attained in that direction. Suppose, finally, that all these branch-roots had come to the end of their growth by the time that man was produced, so that from that day forth there originated no new species, and we have a scheme of the origin of life which does not seem to make greater demands upon the imagination than does that of Darwin, while it avoids most of the difficulties which appear to beset his conception.

For then the likeness between the man and the monkey, and other similar resemblances of which that is a type, would arise, not from the higher germ being derived by natural descent from the lower, but from both the higher and the lower having sprung, with an interval between them, from the common root. And so the gap between the nearest species, which seems so impassable, after all that can be said to bridge it over, would be a real gap—one occasioned, not by the connecting links being lost, but by the connection having lien originally only through the unseen root. Then, too, all those *strange cases of mimicry*, and those apparently odd freaks of

Nature, in which plants resemble insects, or insects are indistinguishable, till they move, from vegetable productions, would be accounted for by the fact that the formative powers, being the very first that would come into play, would pervade the whole root ; so that it would be rather remarkable than otherwise if no such superficial resemblances ever occurred. Naturally, too, the extinct species found in particular countries would display a connection with those now existing there ; because the latter would be merely the later productions of the same part of the trunk-root, or the final productions of the same branch-root, from which the former had previously sprung.

Again, an explanation would be given of a fact difficult to be accounted for by the theory of Natural Selection ; namely, that here and there in the very earliest ages of terrestrial life we come upon creatures of an organization marvellously beautiful and perfect in its kind. The roots that branched off from the trunk-root at a very early time, having a less complex store of powers and capacities to develop, would the sooner run themselves out into the highest form of perfection of which they admitted. And lastly, the parallelism which exists between the course of the development of the individual man, from the germ of his conception to the moment of his birth, and the order of the production of the different animal forms shown by the ancient life-history of the earth—first the fishes, then the amphibia, next the inferior, and lastly the superior mammals—this parallelism does not appear at all astonishing, if the root from which the human race finally sprang forth had itself been previously undergoing a corresponding development, and contained to the last all those forces and capacities from which the successive orders of animals had arisen.

It may be noticed that it would not be necessary, according to this idea, to suppose that, as soon as the powers which made it capable of producing marine creatures and birds were in-

fused into it, the trunk-root would become at once disqualified for giving rise to any fresh species of plants ; or that it would lose its power of originating any new kinds of fishes and birds the moment the forces of the land animals had been grafted upon it, or, again, of sending forth fresh forms of these last directly human energies began to stir within it. Rather, the new capacities would work themselves into prominence by degrees through long periods of time ; and there would be a struggle in the root, first between vegetable and aquatic or aerial animal life, then between this latter and land life, and lastly between the animal and the distinctively human powers—in which the higher would always, but only by degrees, overcome the lower. Hence would arise those strange combinations which are, in fact, met with—creatures of which it is difficult to say whether they are animal rather than vegetable, amphibia, avian reptiles, and anthropoid apes. Perhaps, if not yet thoroughly worked out, the inferior vital force, when finally beaten, would throw itself off in a branch-root, in which it could pursue its proper development without being crushed by the higher form of energy.

But I have said enough of this conception to show its adaptability to existing facts. As I remarked before, I do not propose it as a carefully worked-out explanation of the progress of vital phænomena, but as a sample of the thoughts which may arise in men's minds when they have grasped the idea of creation which I have been endeavouring to set forth.

6. Finally, as I have already intimated, the idea of creation I have propounded explains the fact to which attention has been often directed—that there seem to be two records of creation, contained one in the first, the other in the second chapter of Genesis. We have seen that the former refers to the beginning of the process of construction of all living forms. Let me now state more explicitly than I have yet done, that *the latter* evidently brings us to the actual appearance of man,

and of all those varieties of herbs, trees, beasts, and birds, with which man is especially connected. This I will here attempt to show with some degree of particularity.

With regard, then, to man himself, it is evident that he who is spoken of in the second chapter of Genesis is a visible, substantial, complete being, scrutinising, speaking, sleeping. We have no longer a race, but an individual—not man, but Adam. But it will be said—Was not this man created then and there? Did not GOD take dust of the earth, mould it into a human form, and then breathe into it the breath of life, and make it a living soul? My reply to this is, that in the passing of a man from invisible into apparent existence there must, in any case, be some process of formation, even as there was in the case of you and me, my reader. And, therefore, the real question is, whether the terms used in speaking of Adam are so different from those that would be employed in the case of any one else, as to show that his coming into visible existence was an act of creation, although that of other persons is not. And the answer to this question, as soon as it is thus stated, seems to be sufficiently certain. For, in the first place, it must be noticed that the word here used with regard to Adam—GOD “formed” him—is not used anywhere in the first chapter of Genesis, where creation is undoubtedly spoken of, either in the case of man or of anything else then made. And on the other hand, it is used elsewhere in speaking of the formation of other men, as when David says (Psalm cxxxix., 15, 16), “Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect: and in thy book were all my members written, which day by day were *fashioned*.” And so again the reference to the dust of the ground is not peculiar to Adam’s case. Job pleads with GOD (Job x., 9), “Remember, I beseech Thee, that Thou hast *made me as the clay*; and wilt Thou bring me into dust again?” And some such thought apparently must have been in David’s mind when he exclaimed,

as in the verse preceding those above quoted, "My bones are not hid from Thee, though I be made secretly and fashioned beneath *in the earth*." And lastly, the inspiration of the "breath of life" is surely made at the birth of every child who is brought into the world, seeing, as S. Paul declares (Acts xxii., 25), "GOD giveth to all life, and *breath*, and all things." Observe, reader, I am not arguing that Adam must have come into visible existence in the same way that you and I did, but that the process of his appearing is described in terms sufficiently similar to those which are applicable to other men to allow us to suppose that his advent, like theirs, was a coming into the world, and not an act of creation.

Let us now turn to the lower forms of life. It will be noticed on comparing the vegetable productions mentioned in Gen. ii. 5, with those of which the creation is described in Gen. i. 11, 12, that they are not designated exactly in the same way. In the first chapter the terms are "grass," the "herb yielding seed," and the "fruit-tree yielding fruit;" but in the second chapter there is a significant addition. That which had not appeared up to the time then spoken of is described as "every plant *of the field*," and "every herb *of the field*;" and the force of the restriction thus introduced is indicated by one of the reasons given for their non-production—"there was not a man *to till the ground*." The field then here is the field cultivated by man, and the vegetable forms the coming of which is now announced are the herbs, cereals, fruits, and flowers, which need human care for their preservation.¹ Now as to these, science and

¹ This conclusion is strengthened if we notice the order in which the events are set down in verses 5 to 9 of the second chapter of Genesis. In the 5th verse we are told that no plant or herb of the field had yet been produced; and two reasons are given for their non-production—the want of rain, and the need of human care. Then we are informed how these two obstacles were removed: the want of rain, in no other way than it has been remedied ever since, by vapours rising, becoming condensed, and falling to the earth; and the want of human care, by the appear-

common sense alike teach us that they did not make their appearance in the world until there was some one who valued them, and would take pains to keep them from perishing. It looks, too, as if an intimation were given us here that the man made in the image of GOD, to whose race was committed the charge of replenishing the earth and subduing it, was not the savage hunter and fisherman of what is called the Paleolithic period, armed with rude flint-instruments, inhabiting the shores, and caves, and river banks of a semi-glacial land; but the man to whom was first revealed the culture of the ground, and to whom was intrusted a garden or a field that he might learn to dress it and to keep it. He was the true father of mankind: to him and to his seed, by a process of selection no less divine than it was natural, was secured the supremacy of the earth; and before their face, the half-human stock that had preceded them would as inevitably disappear, as the mammoth, and the other beasts who were their companions, vanished in the presence of the improved climate which heralded the coming man.

It is to this change of the surrounding fauna that attended him, corresponding to that of the flora just alluded to, that we are to refer the words (Gen. ii., 19), "Out of the ground the LORD GOD formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them." It strikes one at once that there must be some restriction here, or Adam's task of giving names would have been alike endless and useless; except in the case of creatures with whom he would afterwards have to do, the proceeding would seem to be an unmeaning one. And this is just the

ing of Man. Finally, the causes which hindered the production of the plants and herbs having been removed, we read that "GOD planted a garden." And if that word "garden" itself be not sufficient to tell us what sort of vegetable productions had been in view throughout the passage, what is immediately added puts the matter beyond all question: "Out of the ground made the LORD GOD to grow every tree that is *pleasant to the sight and good for food.*"

limitation implied in the words "every beast *of the field*." For although that term cannot be confined too narrowly—as is shown by the fact that the serpent is at the beginning of the next chapter reckoned among the beasts of the field—yet the distinction remains that "the field" is the ground as cultivated, or inhabited, or possessed, by man ; so that the expression "beast of the field" does not apply to any outlandish creature discovered by the researches of the geologist or the naturalist, but denotes those well-known animals, whether tame or wild, with which man is commonly associated. And this being so, I submit that the other term also, "fowl of the air," must be held to be conditioned by the idea thus introduced ; even if it were not the case, as apparently it is, that the birds *of the air* generally, as opposed to the heavy running or low flying birds, only came upon the scene about the time of man's appearance. This latter remark applies also to the beasts of the field, as that expression has been explained ; even the animals associated with the pre-Adamite men of the Paleolithic period being scarcely in any case identical with those which are to be met with now.

Still it will be said, do not the words, "Out of the ground GOD formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air," show that these creatures, whatever they were, were actually created at that time ? I have in reality already answered this objection in speaking of the formation of Adam. The word "formed" here is the same as that employed in his case, and is not the same as that which is used in the first chapter to denote undoubted acts of creation. And the expression "out of the ground" is only a compendious form of the phrase "of the dust of the earth" made use of in speaking of man. Animals as well as men have a certain portion of earthy matter in their constitution : and in virtue of that each individual of *them*, as he is formed, is said in Scriptural language to be

made out of the dust. There is nothing, therefore, in this phraseology which obliges us to understand by it anything more than the coming into the world of beings created long before.

I have now completed the view of the nature of creation, and the meaning of the language in which it is recorded which I wished to lay before my readers. But before I conclude, I must try to guard against a misapprehension which may easily arise out of the line of thought I have been pursuing. It may appear to those who believe with the Psalmist, that GOD is about their path and about their bed, and spieth out all their ways, who trace and feel His presence everywhere, and delight in the sense of stability which the thought gives them that "in Him all things consist," that, as far as regards the unfolding of life at any rate, I have relegated the GREAT FATHER to an almost measureless distance in the far-off ages of the past, by representing Him as having once for all set at work the forces by means of which all living phenomena have since been gradually evolved. "What is there," they may ask, "in your theory which corresponds with such words as these : 'Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are a gift and an heritage that cometh of the LORD?' or these, 'He blesseth them so that they multiply exceedingly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease?'"

Let me, then, recall attention to the definition of creation at which we arrived ; and show how the terms of it provide for that continual divine intervention, without the thought of which the heart of no devout man can be really satisfied. "GOD createth all things by making those capacities, establishing those forces, and instituting those laws, which being called into play by circumstances favourable to their action would in due time lead to their production."

In this statement room is left for the Providence and the Presence of GOD at two points.

First, what I have called "favouring circumstances," without which the laws that lead to the propagation of life cannot come into play, may well include some action on the part of Him "in Whom we live and move and have our being." Probably the fire of life is never transmitted from one individual to another without a Divine hand, or one divinely sent, bearing the sacred torch across a chasm which it could not otherwise pass over. Since of all GOD'S potential creations almost infinite in number, few comparatively ever came into visible existence, it would seem almost inevitable that each one that does so must be a selected specimen, that in some sort all things that exist are "a chosen generation, a peculiar people," whose coming into the world is superintended by unseen powers.

But this is not all. The words "laws" and "forces" themselves, when rightly understood, testify of the heavenly Presence. For a force may well be believed to be nothing but the continuous putting forth of the Divine energy, and the law regulating the force, simply the order which GOD chooses to observe, and the restraint which He sees fit to lay upon Himself, in exerting His infinite power. It seems difficult not to admit the truth of Mr. A. R. Wallace's grand generalisation that "all force is *Will-Force*," and that thus "the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually *is*, the Will of higher intelligences, or of One Supreme Intelligence." ("Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection," p. 368.) With this thought I leave the subject. It seems to contain the highest reconciliation that can be conceived between Revelation and Modern Science; and I am thankful that it came from a scientific man rather than from one whose express duty it was to be an interpreter of Holy Scripture.

GEORGE GREENWOOD.

Studies in Modern Problems.

RETREATS FOR PERSONS LIVING IN THE WORLD.

ONE of the most important practical gains in the Catholic Revival is the establishment of Retreats, and, at the same time, one singularly free from an imputation that has been charged against some phases of that movement. Nothing of a party spirit can, except through a most gratuitous love of causing divisions, be laid to the account of retreats. No doubt, men of one side, rather than of another, have sympathized in these devotional exercises; but this has arisen from incidental causes, rather than from any thing in the principle of retreats, viewed in themselves.

It is true that Confession, which hitherto has been treated as a party question, (though, as the Church of England manifestly sanctions that "Godly discipline," any satisfactory reason for such a view can hardly be given) is practised in retreats, and seems naturally to follow as one of its results. But this has arisen, not as being specially taught or urged on such occasions, but as the effect of a quickened sensitiveness of conscience, and of a deeper concern for the state of one's soul before GOD, which the retreat tends to awaken. The conscience has been stirred to a closer, truer examination of its condition; and the desire for relief, or the anxiety to discipline the inner life more carefully, has led to seek the private ministration of the priest.

The principle of retreats is too deeply imbedded in Holy Scripture to admit of mere party considerations. It is a

saying of S. Bernard, that "GOD has always been pleased to signalize His mercies towards men in retreats." The saint may appear to claim too much for his favourite means of devotion; but, viewing retreats generally, in their simplest aspect, as seasons of retirement, of undivided and undistracted communion with GOD, whether alone, or in company with others like-minded—whether preparing for some great work, or absorbed in contemplation and prolonged prayer—the saying is strictly true and most important. The Scriptures are full of evidences of its truth. Nor is the principle of retreats confined to any particular age or country, or to any phase of religious development. It enters into every form of GOD's dealings with His elect, more especially subserving marked periods of progress, alike in the corporate expansion of His Church, and in the increase of grace in individual souls.

Fresh revelations have, in all cases, been given during periods of retreat, and through persons whose whole life had been penetrated by their spirit. Such, for instance, was Abraham's life subsequent to his call, when he "went forth from Haran." From that hour he became permanently detached from the world. Not only was he withdrawn on certain special occasions into the closest intercourse with GOD; his whole life, so far as was possible for one still bound by domestic ties and the necessities of occasional relations with society, was that of "a pilgrim and stranger." He was ever contemplating "a better country, that is, a heavenly." He was continually absorbed in visions and revelations of GOD. He lived his daily life as "one seeing the Invisible." And Abraham was the prophet of the Patriarchal dispensation, which, as in a seed, contained the future Gospel.

The same principle accompanied the giving of the Mosaic law. The lawgiver had been prepared for his great mission by a forty years' seclusion in the wilderness; and was, by special command, separated from all outward claims of or-

dinary life. When he had wholly yielded himself to the præternatural call, and fully embarked in his stupendous charge, he was yet further drawn within the veil that screens from mortal eyes the invisible and eternal, on the mount, in the visible presence of GOD ; and there, while looking upon the very patterns of heavenly things, he received the Divine communications.

The same was the case in ushering in the Prophetical dispensation. The critical era of that dispensation commenced with Samuel ; and he from a child was separated from the world, cloistered for a while even within the precincts of the temple. His institution of the schools of the prophets, to be the nursery of the future race of seers and teachers, was in some degree a perpetuation of the same secluded life. The establishment of the prophetical order, inaugurated by the superabundant measure of spiritual gifts shed upon Elisha, was the fruit of the forty days' retreat passed by Elijah on "Horeb, the mount of GOD."

The same law, only in a still more prominent degree, regulated the introduction of the last and greatest dispensation. S. John Baptist's career was one prolonged retreat, more secluded and severer than any previously recorded ; as though it were purposely proportioned to the surpassing manifestation of Divine grace, for which it prepared the way. The law of retreat was intensified, because the gift to be bestowed, through "the manifestation of the SPIRIT," was "more exceeding glorious."

Instances of this same principle might be indefinitely extended, if we took the cases of individual saints or prophets, irrespective of marked eras in the course of Divine revelation. The "walking with GOD," so significantly recorded of Enoch and Noah, seems to imply an habitual state of contemplation. The names of Isaac, Daniel, Nehemiah, Anna, occur as types at different periods of the history of the elect people, and

under different circumstances of life, of the same contemplative character, and of the special abundance of gifts of grace vouchsafed to persons drawn to such habits of devotion.

If, at each stage of the advancing mystery, retirement from this outward scene, abstraction within the veil of a more conscious presence of Almighty GOD, was necessary to prepare those who were chosen to be the depositories of the secret purposes of GOD, and the channels of His grace to the world, much more should we expect this law of the supernatural life to regulate the development of the Gospel. And this was manifestly the case. What a world of thought springs up at the recollection of the fact, that thirty years of our Blessed LORD'S life was spent in seclusion, to be followed by only three years of active ministry! How striking the contrast in this respect between His life, and that of those who bear his priestly commission among ourselves, between the preparation for the ministry of the Incarnate GOD, and our own! Even after so prolonged a state of separation from the world, the forty days' retreat in the wilderness must yet immediately precede His going forth to minister in the world.

As it had been thus ordained for our LORD Himself in preparing Him for His ministry, so, in calling His disciples to share His labours, the same spirit of retirement pervaded the whole action. "He went out into the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to GOD; and when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples, and of them He chose twelve" (S. Luke vi. 12, 13).

Our LORD ordained a similar preparation, though one of a yet more marked character, for the reception of the gift of Pentecost. The HOLY GHOST first shed Himself forth upon the Church, in answer to the prolonged waiting of faith, pleading our LORD'S promise, cherished and deepened secretly in "the upper chamber." The Apostles had been commanded "to tarry at Jerusalem, till they were endued

with power from on high" (S. Luke xxiv. 49). And the Scripture records their mode of carrying out this injunction of their LORD: "They all continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication" (Acts i. 14). It was in retreat that the dispensation of the SPIRIT opened upon the world, as, in earlier days, the Mosaic dispensation.

The same principle again prevailed in what was virtually a renewed revelation of the Gospel through S. Paul. For whether we consider the distinctness as to its mode of communication, or its completeness in detail, rendering S. Paul's Epistles in some particulars more available for the Church's use than even the holy Gospels themselves, the Pauline revelations bear the character of a fresh, a separate dispensation of the Gospel. S. Paul had not "compained with them all the time that the LORD JESUS went in and out among" the rest of the Apostles. He did not receive the revelation during our LORD'S manifestation in the flesh, nor from the HOLY GHOST in the effusion on the day of Pentecost; but separately from our LORD in vision and secret personal communication of His SPIRIT. As to details which the Church has employed in her ministrations, the words of consecration in the Holy Eucharist, were taken, not from the Gospels, but from one of S. Paul's Epistles (1 Cor. xi. 23—26); and from other Epistles were taken both the solemn sacerdotal blessing, "The Peace of GOD," (Phil. iv. 7—21), and the minor benediction closing the daily offices of prayer, "The Grace of our LORD" (Rom. xvi. 24).

But the point for us to note in this remarkable supplemental revelation, is this—that it was the fruit of a prolonged retreat. Three years' seclusion in Arabia was the chosen means through which this "least," "one born out of due time," became the depository of a gift of divine knowledge, which rendered him equal "to the very chiefest Apostles."

The last revelation vouchsafed to mankind was committed

to S. John the Divine, and this occurred again in a period of his life when he was especially withdrawn from the world—during his lonely confinement in the isle of Patmos. Thus the Book of GOD was closed, as it had been opened, with gifts of inspiration vouchsafed in retirement.

These many great and signal instances connecting the use of retreats with the most transcendent dispensations of the will of GOD, are of so uniform and marked a character, as to show an essential law regulating His intercourse with His creatures.

Moreover, these instances cannot be regarded as exceptional. They show a purpose to form a habit of mind, a special development of character, in those devoted to the service of GOD. Our LORD'S observance of this practice of occasional retirement during His ministry, is carefully recorded in the Gospel, and His example in this respect has a direct bearing on ourselves, more especially as He was wont to take His disciples apart to share these retreats with Himself. They cannot be explained as mere occasions of refreshment after toil. Their object evidently was to recruit the powers of the inner life, as the preparation through secret communion with His FATHER for fresh conflicts and temptations. They betoken a habit of mind ever tending to withdraw, whenever possible, from the outward world, for the renewal of the true strength of the human spirit in silent and rapt communion with the Invisible. In two successive chapters of S. Luke we read, "And when it was day He departed and went into a desert place" (iv. 42); and again, "And he withdrew Himself into the wilderness and prayed" (v. 16).

Nor could such a lesson as that involved in our LORD'S approval of Mary of Bethany, be lost to the disciples. Whatever else may be implied in the contrast drawn between Mary and Martha, it is clear, that the cherishing a contemplative habit of mind was among the objects approved, and that the "one thing needful" is, therefore, in part connected with

the life of devotional retirement, or is at least dependent upon it in some very remarkable manner (S. Luke x. 38—42). Mary's sitting at the feet of JESUS, while Martha served, is the picture of a side of life which can be fully realized only in a retreat.

Thus, then, we are manifestly placed in the presence of a momentous law of the Divine operations, which cannot possibly be set aside in considering the relations which the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD has established between Himself and His people in His personal communications with them.

We are not here entering into details, nor anticipating what may be urged in the way of objections drawn from differences, whether of circumstance or of time. Our object has been hitherto simply to establish the principle in question. Its application to ourselves involves a far larger consideration. The benefits of a retreat, viewed generally, are implied in these instances drawn from Holy Scripture. The preparation of the soul for the reception of Divine truth—the bringing the mind of man into harmony with the Mind of GOD—the setting his will and spiritual faculties free from the powers of the world—the predisposing and fitting him for sustained intercourse with unseen things—the enabling him to maintain his standing-ground on a higher level of spiritual consciousness, and thus enduing him with power to go forth to the fulfilment of high and arduous efforts in correspondence with the designs of GOD—the illumination of his soul through increasing knowledge and the revelation of secret mysteries—such are the results which we have seen to be attained during such hours of isolation and retirement from the visible world.

It was to be expected that a principle thus impressed on the first disciples, endeared and consecrated by our LORD'S own practice—one to which, manifestly, the prophets of the New, as before of the Old Dispensation, were indebted for so

much of their inspiration and spiritual strength, would become, even though not expressly enjoined, a settled tradition, and an abiding law of life. It was not the purpose of the New Testament to give minute rules of practical devotion. Such rules naturally followed from the principles embodied in the example and habits of our LORD and His Apostles. A loving faith, under the guidance of the HOLY SPIRIT, fulfils its part in adapting these laws to the circumstances of successive ages, and the variable details of ordinary life. Out of the predispositions thus formed in the mind of the early Church, arose the tendency, so quickly and so extensively developed, to withdraw from the world, whether as solitaries or in communities, for the purpose of divine study and prolonged prayer, which, as the Church's life became settled and organized, grew into what afterwards became known as the contemplative Orders. This side of the religious life is essentially connected with the principle of retreats. But it is manifestly beyond the scope of this essay. Our view is confined to the use of special seasons of retirement, as distinct from a life of retirement ; to the occasional withdrawal from ordinary uses and daily duties, whether in the case of members of religious communities, or of persons, clerical or lay, men or women, living in the world.

The institution of formal retreats was coeval with the monastic organization. As monasteries spread, opportunities for yet more entire seclusion, during occasional periods, were sought by their members ; and secular persons were drawn, by their example, and through their aid, to seek similar aids to devotion, as far as the duties of ordinary life permitted. The Dominican and Franciscan Orders systematized and developed the simple rule of yet earlier days, forming plans for conducting retreats which still exist as an established rule in the Roman communion : the Dominicans being still among the chief directors of retreats. The " Brethren of the Common

Lot," in yet later days, extended the same system in the Low Countries. "The Imitation of Christ" is an imperishable witness of the character of piety, sustained by habits of devotion thus cherished. Thomas à Kempis was but one link in a long chain of saintly examples of the devotional life of mediæval times, fed by systematic rules of meditation, learnt and maintained in retreat.

The earliest retreats, which assumed a systematic form, were those held in the Thebaid, where it was not an infrequent custom for the monks of a Laura to withdraw, singly or in pairs, to some yet more secluded hermitage, for stricter silence, fasting, meditation, and prayer, than could be observed in the company of their brethren; and what the more secluded hermitage was to the monk, the Laura was to secular visitors. The practice continued, in some form or other, down to the thirteenth century, when it became more systematized through the institution of the Dominican and Franciscan Tertiaries, to whom the houses of their respective orders were open for periodical seasons of retirement.¹

But the "Spiritual Exercises" of S. Ignatius Loyola form the grand era in the history of retreats. Apparently for the first time the principle of retreats was made by S. Ignatius an absolute law in testing and training candidates for the religious life. In the rule of S. Augustine, there is no mention of retreats. The first important step in the novitiate for the Society of Jesus is the retreat; and from this distinguishing feature of its rule a new organization of the system of retreats resulted.

So important is the bearing of the Ignatian method on the whole question, that it becomes necessary to enter at some length into its main elements.

The object of these famous Exercises, as stated by their

¹ For the information contained in this paragraph I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. Littledale.

author, is to "lead man to conquer himself, to disengage himself from the fatal influence of evil affections ; and, with the heart thus set free, to trace out for himself the plan of a true Christian life." There can be no question but that S. Ignatius was indebted to the traditionary spiritual wisdom of preceding ages, in the formation of his code of rules and the treatment of the subjects which form the matter of his Exercises. But notwithstanding any influence which the use of his predecessors in the spiritual life may have had on his scheme of teaching, and although his system is composed of the simplest truths, which must be more or less familiar even to neophytes in practical religion ; yet, considering the wonderful arrangement and completeness of the Spiritual Exercises, they must ever stand out among the great mass of similar writings, as the creation of a new world of thought of the most original character ; and they have undoubtedly given an extraordinary impulse to the practice of retreats, such as no other effort of the kind can be compared with, impressing on all such devotional use their own peculiar line of teaching.

It must be carefully noted, that there is nothing whatever beyond the limits of the most true Catholicism, in the Exercises of S. Ignatius. They are singularly free from allusion to any controverted points of theology. They are simply a masterly combination of the main normal and practical truths which concern the soul of every man. They deal with human nature in its universal characteristics, not with a school or specific form of thought. No doubt the scheme of S. Ignatius has exercised the greatest possible influence in forming the stamina, if I may so speak, of the Jesuit mind, giving to it its marvellous strength and concentrated devotion. But it is equally certain, that what the Exercises have effected in furthering this end, is due to the application of the purest Christian ideas, by bringing to bear, in the most effective form and under the most moving circumstances, the great

fundamental laws of GOD'S dealings with man, of man's account with GOD, and of the life of the SPIRIT in His work of healing and sanctification. Whatever is distinctive in the Jesuit community, rendering it an object of distrust to many, even among Roman Catholics themselves, is to be referred to other principles and influences pervading its system, not to the modes adopted to impart determination of will, and devotion of heart.

It is important to make this disclaimer, because the Exercises are universally held to constitute a model system, to which all directors of retreats must look as the primary law of every scheme of instruction to be adopted. Otherwise, the acceptance of the principle of retreats might seem, in some degree at least, to commit us to the approval of the whole system, of which the Ignatian Exercises avowedly formed a part. It is sufficient to look even cursorily through the subjects of the Exercises, to be convinced of the truth of this assertion.

The Exercises are formed on a plan embracing all the successive stages, through which a soul must pass in its progress from the depths of sin to the completion of its conversion to GOD. They are arranged in three grand divisions, called respectively the Purgative, the Illuminative, and the Unitive Way. The object of the Purgative way is to work in the soul a horror of sin and a true contrition; of the Illuminative, to incline the soul to the love of divine knowledge, and the practice of virtue; of the Unitive, to confirm the soul in habitual recollection of GOD'S presence, and closeness of intimate fellowship with Him.

The following is a brief digest of the course of subjects which form these three divisions :

Of the first or purgative way, the chief subjects are, the true end of the creature, more especially that of man; sin, with its distinctions into mortal and venial, and their respective effects;

the sin of the angels ; the sin of our first parents ; our own sin ; hell and its torments ; death and the last judgment. These subjects are followed by the exposition of the parable of the Prodigal Son, which closes the purgative course.

The second, or illuminative series embraces the following subjects : the Incarnation, first viewed generally, then divided into the separate mysteries of the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Infancy and Childhood ; to which succeed certain selected acts of our LORD'S life—the Temptation, the calling of the Apostles, the cleansing of the Temple, the Sermon on the Mount, the stilling the tempest, the walking on the sea, the mission of the Apostles, the conversion of the Magdalene, the feeding the multitude, the Transfiguration, the raising of Lazarus, the supper at Bethany, the triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, the preaching in the Temple, and closing with the chief points of the Passion.

Lastly, the unitive course is composed of the events of the life of our Divine LORD subsequent to His Resurrection, embracing His different appearances during the great forty days, and ending with His Ascension into heaven, and His Session at the Right Hand of the FATHER.

The two last series are interspersed with practical rules and meditations ; such as relate, for example, to prayer, the choice of a vocation, the discernment of spirits, the battle between good and evil, and the reign of CHRIST in the soul ; while, in the course of the first, the purgative series special directions as to the examination of conscience, penance, and preparation for confession, are introduced.

The Ignatian scheme, moreover, contains a plan or order of time, together with rules for occupation, and hours of prayer. A period of four weeks is contemplated as the full period, during which the whole of the Exercises may be gone through. But a week, according to this system, is understood to mean, *not a period of time*, but a course of meditations. Hence, its

length varies according to the needs of the soul. A certain series of mental operations has to be gone through, or, rather, the mind has to be subjected to a certain definite series of influences; and, accordingly as this end is gained, the period is fixed. It is not a question of days, but of spiritual operations. Thus, the four weeks of meditations necessary to complete the course, will require more or less than four weeks of days, according to the mental or spiritual condition of the person in retreat. He may need a shorter or longer period of actual time for the entire course, or for one or other portion of the course, in order that the intended effect may be produced.

Understanding, then, the term "week" in this spiritual or metaphorical sense, the method pursued for the attainment of the end in view, is as follows: The first week has for its end the freeing of the soul from the power of its sinful tendencies and entanglements, and the influence of evil habits. The second week leads the soul into an intelligent view of the life of CHRIST, and fixes it in a firm resolve to give itself to an obedient imitation of His example. The third is employed in penetrating and filling the soul with ideas calculated to deepen and confirm the impressions made during the preceding weeks. The fourth week raises the soul—now purified, illuminated, and confirmed in grace—to perfect love, and the irrevocable surrender of itself to its LORD in a wedded union of will and affection.

The person entering the retreat is supposed to be animated with courage and a supernatural desire, but yet as a sinner. The object proposed is to convert the sinner into a saint, or rather to place him in a course tending, if his will continue to co-operate with the designs formed in the retreat, to ensure his subsequent advance to a high degree of sanctity.

The cause of the variations in regard of the actual time to be allowed for the different stages of the course, will, therefore, readily be seen. The problem is how to bring to bear, in co-

operation with the interior movements of the SPIRIT of GOD, the most effectual means of influence. To destroy the empire of evil in the heart, and establish there the permanent reign of what is good, which is the object proposed, is held to require a different application of the appointed means, so as to suit different souls. Hence the difference of time allotted to the several portions of the Exercises. Thus, in the case of one whose heart is in a less advanced state, the first week, or the purgative way, must be comparatively prolonged, in proportion to the later portions; while again, the second and third weeks, or the illuminative and unitive ways, must in their turn occupy a larger space of the course, in the case of those who are more advanced. Sometimes a retreat may be wholly occupied by exercises of the purgative kind. At other times, subjects drawn from the illuminative or the unitive way will form the only matter for meditation; though even in the highest range of instruction, the thought of sin and its remedies can never be wholly excluded, even though it may be dealt with only incidentally and implicitly. In fixing the proportion to be given to the one or the other portion of the Exercises or course of subjects, the instructor must be guided by what he considers to be most conducive to the wants, at the time, of those to whom his instructions are addressed.

Again, as to the arrangement of the daily occupations. According to the Ignatian method, each day has four hours (which are not, or need not be, consecutive) set apart for devotion, to which is added one hour of the night, thus giving five hours of the twenty-four to this object. These five hours are distinct from those set apart for offices, times of prayer, reading, examination of conscience—to which last purpose two quarters of an hour each day are allotted. They are also independent of the time occupied by the delivery of the addresses or instructions. The remainder of the day is taken up by meals, recreation, manual labour, or other employment.

A distinctive point in the teaching of S. Ignatius must be borne in mind, in order to give a real view of his method, lest it should seem to be a kind of Procrustean bed, on which every soul alike is to be stretched. One of the first rules laid down by him for the director of a retreat is, that "he adapt the exercises to the age, the capacity, the strength of the person about to perform them ; that he never impose too heavy a burden on an unenlightened mind, or a faint heart ; that he never propose any thing to any one which is not in proportion to his present strength and good will."

One, commenting on the practical character of his design, says : " S. Ignatius makes himself all things to all men ; he sacrifices to the utility of each the beauty and harmony of his plan ; or, to express it better, his plan is to carry to the highest state of perfection those who are capable of it ; and yet to be useful to more limited minds, and more imperfect wills " (Introduction to "*Manresa, or Spiritual Exercises of S. Ignatius*": Burns and Lambert, 1860).

The way in which the Ignatian method is practically carried out in the present day, will be seen in the following record of a retreat, lately passed by one on his probation for admission into one of the houses of the Jesuit order in this country.

The retreat commenced on Saturday with a (week's) meditation on the purgative way, the chief subjects being, the End of Life, Sin, Death, Judgment, Hell, and the last, the parable of the Prodigal Son.

The following Monday was a day of repose for walks and recreation.

The next day commenced with the illuminative way, the meditations being on different points of the life of our LORD, and lasting for the next ten days, succeeded by another day of repose. The illuminative way concluded with a six days' consideration of the Passion.

After another day of repose, there followed one week's

meditation on the unitive way, the subjects being the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Resurrection Life, Heaven, and the Love of GOD.

The order of each day was as follows :

Rise before . . . 5. 0 a.m.	Dinner . . . 1. 0 p.m.
Meditation (an hour) 5.40 „	Manual labour,
Mass . . . 6.40 „	reading, private
Breakfast . . . 7.30 „	prayers . . . 2. 0 „
Meditation (1½ hour) 8.30 „	Meditation (1½
Manual labour . . 9.45 „	hour) . . . 5. 0 „
Meditation (1½ hour) 11. 0 „	Tea . . . 7.15 „
Reading, private	Bed . . . 9.30 „
prayers . . . 12.15 p.m.	

It must not be forgotten that the system we have been considering was designed as an instrument of training for the religious life, at once testing and advancing a candidate for the order to his desired end. Otherwise, it would seem elaborated and prolonged to a degree that would make it unfit for use. It is not intended to be followed with any exactness of detail in its application to ordinary cases. Its value as a guide to those engaged in giving ordinary retreats, consists in supplying a standard, and a line of thought which may be applied at discretion. And the remarkable wisdom of its construction is shown by this, that it is literally impossible to take any line of subjects for meditation during a retreat, which will not be found to embody the principles of which it is composed, more or less, in a similar order of sequence. This results from the fact that the method is ordered according to the laws which must ever regulate the progress of the soul in its advance towards perfection, while, at the same time, by its elasticity, it can be accommodated to the needs alike of the least, as of the most advanced scholars. *The Exercises*, indeed, form as perfect an outline of motive-

powers to act on the soul in the order in which their influence is most calculated to tell, as can possibly be conceived. They are to the spiritual life what the Newtonian system is to the natural world. Every fresh line of thought falls within their grand scope, as surely as any fresh discovery in astronomy falls within the primal law of gravity ; while, at the same time, its capability of adaptation to individual cases, however various, gives to it a separate and additional proof of its essential and practical truth.

The Ignatian Exercises are sometimes spoken of as a remnant of a system of visionary or ecstatic mysticism, at variance with the true laws of human progress. Such a view is founded on a complete misapprehension alike of their substance and their purpose. The idea that underlies them, from their commencement to their close, is that the intelligence must be informed and developed by means of real and simple, but grand, elements, of moral and spiritual truth, quickened by the regulated play of the imagination ; and thus, by these combined influences, brought to bear on the will and the affections, wealthfully arousing them to energetic action. They imply, in every case, the previous effort of the reason and fancy, in order to produce an effect on the active powers. And their whole influence depends on preserving a true harmony between these different phases of action and progress in the soul's development.

I have dwelt thus long on the Ignatian method, not merely because the publication of the Exercises forms such an important era in the history of retreats, but because they also afford occasion for illustrating the kind of subjects ordinarily suggested for meditation, and the principles which must ever guide the instructor in the choice and adaptation of his materials. We may now turn to the consideration of the system of retreats, such as are more especially contemplated in this essay.

Retreats may be either general or particular ; that is, either for a body of persons collected together, or for separate individuals. In both cases a director is necessary. He is responsible for the rules to be observed, for giving the subjects of meditation, and for such private aid as may be desired to meet the special needs of each person attending the retreat.

The time allotted for a retreat necessarily varies according to circumstances. Religious communities are naturally able to prolong their retreat beyond the time possible for those living in the world ; and among religious, contemplative orders have their time more entirely at their own disposal beyond those of an active order. The retreats given to religious houses abroad last generally ten days. Some exceed that term, while others fall short of it. Retreats given to secular persons generally occupy three or four days, but they are often shorter from the necessities of employment ; or a single day, or parts of three or more days, may be all that can be allowed. On an average, less than three days, can scarcely suffice to produce such an impression as the system is designed to effect : four, when possible, is better, but any amount of retirement, however short, if rightly used, will hardly fail to bring the soul under the special influences of the unseen world.

The number of addresses given each day of the retreat is generally three ; sometimes as many as four. Often an instruction is given on some practical matter, instead of an address ; the object of such instruction being to excite in the mind feelings calculated to incline the will to the service of GOD, and leave on the memory thoughts suitable for meditation, on which the reason and imagination may afterwards be exercised. The addresses are generally prefaced by the "Veni Creator," and a few collects, or a short extemporary prayer ; and are concluded by the "*Anima Christi*," and the Blessing. The director, ordinarily,

is seated while giving the address, as well as those whom he addresses. After the address the director retires, while those in retreat either remain in their places or go to their rooms, and, for a certain fixed time, are occupied in meditation. Many commit the chief points of the address to paper to facilitate the meditation and for future reference. There is an entire absence of pressure or restraint as to place or posture in carrying on the meditation. Ordinarily it is done kneeling ; but, if this posture become irksome, sitting or walking may be chosen instead. Whatever, in fact, tends to assist the mind in the free and healthful exercise of its powers and fixedness of attention, may be recommended, so that reverence be preserved.

It is of the utmost moment both at the commencement and throughout a retreat, to preserve the mind from all that is calculated to distract or disquiet it. On this account, the observance of silence is essential. It would of course be mere prudery to scruple asking or answering a question on matters of absolute necessity. But the director alone is free from the rule of silence. For the same reason, writing or reading letters is disallowed, unless something of real moment is involved. The one object in view is to preclude as far as possible the possibility of anything hindering the absorbed attention of the mind to the great and vital questions presented to it. During meals, some book generally is read aloud, each person taking his turn, or some one singly undertaking the task. If a single person read throughout the time, carefulness as to reverence, in matters of detail, would necessarily be of great importance.

Intercourse between the director and those engaged in the retreat, is always open and unrestricted. No one is constrained to seek such aid ; but the director is free, according to his own discretion, to open communication with any whom he desires to see. Or, if the charge of receiving those who may

come to him for spiritual counsel, is beyond his strength, or the time at his command, he may depute some other priest engaged in the retreat to assist him.

It is of great importance in separating after a retreat, though the rule of silence necessarily ceases, to preserve, as far as possible, the quiet reverential tone with which it has been conducted. It would be an ill sign of the results of such a season of solemn communing with GOD, to break up as boys leaving school, or a military band returning from a soldier's funeral. Rather, the healthful feeling would be to dread the return to ordinary intercourse, lest the heavenly vision should altogether fade away in descending from the Mount of Transfiguration to the plain below.

We may now turn to consider the practice of retreats as conducted among ourselves at the present day. Their revival amongst us is a striking proof that the Catholic Movement has passed out of the region of controversy in which, of necessity, it was at first occupied, into the yet more eventful sphere of the devotional life. The desire for their revival existed before our own day, and was expressed in one of our most popular devotional manuals; but the desire lay dormant for many years, and its expression bore no fruit.

Bishop Wilson has left the following record of his own convictions of the value of retreats: "The primitive bishops had places of retirement near their cities, that they might separate themselves from the world; lest, teaching others, they should forget themselves—lest they should lose the spirit of piety themselves, while they were endeavouring to fix it in others" ("Sacra Privata," Works by Cruttwell, vol. i. p. 231, 4to, 1781). Nor is this passage a solitary witness to the existence of such a desire in the mind of the English clergy. An English translation of a foreign Work containing instructions and meditations for a retreat for priests, appeared

in 1703. The work is entitled "Pastoral Instructions, and Instructions and Meditations for an Annual Retirement of ten days."¹ It was reprinted at Oxford in 1861 (Shrimpton), under the title of "A Plea for Seasons and Places of Spiritual Retirement for the working Clergy," by a priest of the Church of England, accompanied by a preface recommending the adaptation of the principle to our own case. These instructions and meditations are of an earnest, devotional character, the subjects being such as more immediately concern the priestly life. They are drawn up in a regular connected series, arranged so as to provide two meditations for every day, each meditation being followed by "affections," that is, fervent expressions of devotional feelings and desires, and closing with one or more "resolutions." Another work, translated and abridged from the French of Bourdaloue, and entitled "Spiritual Exercises; Readings for a Retreat of seven days," appeared in 1868 (Masters).

It is possible that the republication of the first-named work, combining with other influences, tended to direct attention to the subject; at least, it marks a yearning in other quarters coincident with the movement out of which the first actual design of a retreat amongst us originated. The actual restoration of retreats amongst us is, under GOD, due to a society of priests accustomed to meet in London, known as "the Society of the Holy Cross," which after many years of comparative privacy has lately developed, and now numbers between 350 and 400 clergy of the Church of England. The first retreat was held under the immediate direction of a few of the brethren of this society, about seventeen years ago.

It is interesting to note the imperfect rudimentary essays

¹ It was originally written for the use of the clergy by the celebrated Antony Godeau, bishop of Grasse and Vence. The translation was dedicated to Humphrey Humphreys, bishop of Hereford, by his chaplain, Basil Kennett.

in the formation of a system, which has now attained an important position, and a steady consistency. They show, moreover, that it was an effort of life springing from amongst ourselves, not borrowed from without. Had it been the simple copy of a foreign original, it would have at once assumed a more formal shape. The palpable mistakes of the first promoters of the system, is an unquestionable guarantee of its being the exuberant growth of an earnest and vigorous, though untrained, life. The first retreat, held at a country parsonage in Kent, as well as the one held in the following year at Oxford, was attended by eight or ten priests, and each lasted two days. There were offices of prayer, and the celebration of Holy Communion as usual. But, in other respects, these retreats resembled rather a meeting for mutual conference on spiritual subjects, and private meditation, than for such a course of teaching and connected contemplation, as now forms the main feature of a retreat. The plan adopted was to read passages from a spiritual book, which afterwards formed the subject of mental prayer. There were besides two conferences each day on practical questions, the subjects chosen at one of the meetings being conversions, home missions, and confession. At the third retreat, held the following year, for the first time definite subjects for meditation were given ; and after this the practice grew into the settled form now prevailing.

The rapid and wide spread of retreats during the last seventeen years is one of the cheering signs of the growth, in the Church of England, of spiritual religion of the highest Catholic type. They are at present held every year (varying only in minor details) at about eighteen or twenty different places. They have received the express sanction and support of certain of our bishops. The greatest number of priests attending any one retreat, as far as the writer is aware, has been *about seventy*—the general average varying from ten to

twenty. Not merely the clergy, and religious communities now regularly hold their retreats ; but laymen and women living in the world and men of business have had the same system arranged to meet their needs and opportunities. Nor is the movement to be considered as limited to what is more properly entitled to the name. Meetings are held in many places, in which the same principle is followed out, as far as circumstances permit. The writer knows an instance of a ruri-decanal meeting which, for several years, has been formed into a quasi-retreat, with regular addresses and intervals of private meditation, the house of the rural dean being generously surrendered for the purpose.

The desire for retreats is, moreover, rapidly spreading. Everywhere we find a readiness to offer country parsonages and colleges, where they may be held. The difficulty now felt is to find priests capable of conducting them. While the newly-stirred desire calls for unmixed thankfulness to the Giver of all grace, it sadly reveals the great defect of theological and spiritual training in the main body of our clergy ; and it constitutes a very special call to provide means for supplying so great a lack through a fuller dogmatic teaching, and a more systematic discipline, in the preparation of candidates for Holy Orders.¹

But it is time to consider the chief objections made, either

¹ There are, however, signs of promise that the want here expressed is being provided for far beyond what might have been expected. It is now usual to advertise lists of retreats for clergy annually in the public journals, as well as in the papers of the "Society of the Holy Cross." One of the later rules of the society requires its members to make a retreat yearly. The most remarkable proof of the increase of the desired supply is that nearly twenty retreats were held by the Evangelist Fathers of Cowley and other priests in 1872, and that nearly the same number were proposed to be held in 1873, at which, up to the close of the autumn, about 400 priests have been present. One cannot allude to this brotherhood without expressing the deep debt of gratitude due to it from the Church of England, for its unsparing devotion and ability in this particular department of the Church's work.

to the principle of retreats, or to our usual mode of conducting them.

I. It is argued that retreats tend to excite emotions more fictitious than real, and to hinder rather than promote the true and sober progress of the soul's life, by rendering it liable to reactions, which are likely to leave it more dead, or at least in a less simple and healthful state, than before. The temporary excitement of religious feelings which alone a retreat is supposed, according to this objection, to effect, is thought to be dearly purchased at the risk of subsequent subsidence to a state of exhaustion and comparative torpor, or, at least, a relapse of the ordinary level.

That the emotions excited at a retreat may subside and leave no fruit, is but to charge against it an objection that lies against every effort of the preacher, or religious instructor. If such an objection were to be allowed, all endeavours to bring external influences to bear in the communication of Divine truth must cease. To state the real extent of such an objection might be a sufficient answer to it. But it may be further urged that the course of instruction ordinarily chosen for a retreat, such as has already been sketched out, bears on its face the greatest security against such a liability, as far as the outward influence of its subject matter is concerned. For, as already abundantly shown, the proper work of a retreat is not to act directly on the feelings, but on the intelligence, conscience and will. The sustained length of the meditations, the accompanying aid of seclusion, silence, abstraction, and a concentration of ideas, all combine to give to the mind the most favourable opportunity for receiving and pondering a line of thought, calculated especially to become an impelling power to act afterwards on the feelings and energies of the inner life. The clear, undisturbed apprehension of great vital principles of doctrine and of action, is the very best means that *can be set in motion*, under the grace of GOD, for the perma-

nent change of the heart. If it fail to produce the whole desired results, at all events some effect has been produced in the storing up of thoughts and ideas taken in during a momentous pause in the soul's ordinary course, which can scarcely be forgotten ; and which, if not at the time, yet at some future day, can hardly fail to rise up with some degree of power, influencing the currents of a renewed life. It is the favourable opportunity given for reflection, under very moving circumstances, and variety and extent of appeal, which constitute the essence of a retreat ; a system, in fact, as much opposed as is possible to the transient excitement of emotions, which are too apt to pass away as the morning dew, simply because there is no underlying information of the reason, conscience, or will, to remain as the groundwork of abiding reflection.

Nor has the same objection any more weight, if it proceed on the supposition of something forced and unnatural being brought to bear on the soul, and so an unreal state produced, which, being assumed for the time, necessarily ceases when the soul subsides to its ordinary habit of thought and occupation. It is possible, of course, in giving a retreat, as in preaching a sermon, or in any intercourse with the souls of others, that the instructor may choose a subject or line of thought beyond or beside the capacities or needs of those addressed. He may shoot above their heads, or delight himself in flights of eloquence, or in raptures of devotional fancy, mere elevated and beautiful sentiments, such as may, indeed, exhibit his own personal gifts, but all the while the understanding of his hearers fail to be edified. There is no guarding against such possibilities, except by instructing the instructor, and choosing well our instruments.

But, as has been already shown, one of the first principles in directing a retreat is to adapt the line of instruction to the spiritual condition of those who attend it. The master spirits

to whom we look for guidance in such exercises, uniformly and with urgency of appeal, insist on the necessity of not setting before the soul an unattainable standard, or too onerous requirements. Still more strongly do they press on the director of a retreat the importance of not seeking to exhibit his own powers to the manifest disregard of the needs of his hearers. The most earnest exhortation is always given to the instructor, to seek the best means of placing himself in accord with the immediate wants and capacities of those committed to his teaching, to draw them on, and raise them as they are able to bear it; and thus healthily to arouse and stimulate the whole man according to the appointed laws which regulate the action of the mind and heart, without some knowledge of which one could hardly venture to undertake so responsible an office. Moreover, there is an important aid ready at hand to keep the director of a retreat in accord with his hearers, which does not exist in all modes of instruction. The fact of the free and confidential intercourse between him and them on the one subject which has brought them together—the unreserved opening of the heart in confession, or, if not in formal confession, yet in private intercourse on the soul's deepest interests, naturally accompanying the exercises—is one of its sure signs of reality and depth of influence, while it cannot fail to act as a constant guide and restraint to the director in determining the selection of his subjects, or, at least, his mode of dealing with them.

II. Some have questioned whether the order of a retreat, such as has been assumed in this essay as the normal rule, is not too austere, or, at least, too constrained. It must be carefully noted that austerity, as the term is ordinarily understood, has no place whatever in a retreat. Bodily mortification, fasting—except such as the Church's rule may enjoin—loss of necessary sleep, even want of ease in posture, or the strain of too prolonged meditation, as already has been

observed, are especially discouraged. The practice aimed at in the objection is, no doubt, the rule of silence. It is supposed that this rule must act as an unnatural restraint, painful and depressing; and that an important improvement would be effected, if a more cheerful tone and freer play of thought were encouraged, especially since the very object of bringing persons together to a retreat must ensure a common aim, and a character of conversation in harmony with the general design.

This question may fairly be viewed as a matter depending for its solution on the results of practical experience. Retreats have now been carried on amongst us for a sufficient length of time to enable us to form a satisfactory judgment on such a point; and there can, I suppose, be no doubt, as to what those who have been most frequently present at retreats, would say upon it. It is possible, indeed, that some persons may feel entire silence, lasting two, three, or more days, irksome, and their minds require relief from the pressure of their own thoughts in communing with the thoughts of others. This may be the case with those who are unaccustomed to the practice of meditation, beginners in a purely spiritual exercise. And it is undoubtedly an important and advisable thing, especially in the commencement of a system, to accommodate the rule to meet such cases, even though the rule itself be essential to its perfectness. What is only meant for the soul's advancement and increased joy in GOD, ought not to be felt as burdensome and unnatural. But if experience has shown the value of such occasional accommodation, it has unquestionably proved, on the other hand, that those who have begun the practice of retreats with the allowance of occasional conversation, even though of a grave and subdued character, have grown into the desire for increased strictness in this respect, and have felt more and more drawn to the conviction of the value of the absolute rule. The writer, from his own

personal experience, can testify how persons who, even though attending a retreat for the first time, and having entered it dreading the stricter rule, yet have afterwards expressed themselves as most thankful for it. The truth is that time passes rapidly in a retreat. The regularity and the constant interchange of offices, private prayers, Holy Communion, addresses, with meal times, and exercise, leaves only sufficient space for the pure mental exercise of meditation, which is the very object of the retreat, and affords no room for the sense of loneliness and vacancy. On the contrary, there is a sensible relief in the conscious power of uninterrupted freedom, so that the soul may expand and go forth into regions of thought and supernatural visions too dimly discerned amid the distractions of ordinary life ; or may follow out, without let or hindrance, views and considerations of one's own personal state before GOD, or of the eternal realities which compass us about, most needful for all to contemplate before the time of our probation is past.

It must not be forgotten, that the object of a retreat is not companionship of harmonious minds, or the gain of intelligence through mutual communications and play of thought. This, of course, is of inestimable value in itself, but it has its own proper place. A retreat also has its special object, and that is to give, as far as outward circumstances may further it, an undivided influence favourable to the presentation of unseen and impalpable truths in their bearing on one's own solitary personal life. Its peculiar aim is to correct the consequences of ceaseless converse with the outer world, and remove the obstructions which other minds and other thoughts present to the full working of the conscience on itself, and thus make the impressions of eternal concerns and verities more vivid and deep than they can be in social life, causing a more complete realization of what only floats before *the soul* vaguely in its ordinary state. Any one will perceive

how much a return even to serious topics of conversation may interfere with this design; and how impossible it is, where matters of interest, however grave, have been opened, in the quick mutual play of different minds, to prevent conversation becoming sufficiently exciting to occupy, if not to absorb the thoughts, it may be long after the intercourse has ceased.

Moreover, it is not merely the absence of distraction, but the security against the possibility of such distraction, and the certainty of a safeguard against one's own heedlessness or forgetfulness, which is desired to be maintained, as the point on which so much of the integrity of the concentrated effect of the exercises depends. Any one who attends retreats may judge of this question for himself, supposing conversation has been allowed only during times of recreation, by comparing his own state of mind before and after such intercourse has passed. If an agreeable walk, with pleasant, though becomingly serious talk, has followed the afternoon's meditation, there is a sensible relaxation in the tone of mind previously maintained, which is felt to detract from the influence of the evening's meditation; and the unavoidable consequence is a certain deterioration, or sinking down to a lower level, or at least a greatly increased liability to distractions with diminished power of resistance. How constantly have those who on entering into a retreat feared lest they should prove unable to sustain the pressure of so much rule, and the absence of varied interest and play of thought, regretted the return to the world's converse; and those by whom the restraint was at first felt to be irksome, afterwards been thankful for the discipline, and looked back to the unwonted isolation as fraught with something of solemn anticipation of the time when, whether they will or not, they must stand face to face before GOD, when the One Almighty Presence will be all in all to the soul!

The danger of an imperfectly-kept retreat is, lest the addresses should prove to be merely a series of sermons; having, indeed, the immediate influence of a moving discourse, but leaving little result. Even if there have been earnest attention to the addresses, the quick return to the ordinary current of thought during the intervals, leaves room for only a slight amount of reflection, to be followed by little, if any, abiding change in the soul's after progress. The object of a retreat is, rather, to provide that the ideas suggested should, during its progress, grow and accumulate within the soul; and, by a combined and concentrated power, as they occupy the whole field of vision, determine and fix the entire bent of the inward life upon a new standard, and with fresh energies. For this purpose, a steadily-sustained force of connected thoughts is needed, and time for the development of ideas to form new principles within the soul. It is not uncommonly found that the earlier portion of a retreat is occupied in merely getting rid of previous trains of distracting thought or anxieties, or in freeing the soul from some self-contemplative mood absorbing all power of attention; and only the latter part felt to be of any benefit, because this alone has been passed with a free and unembarrassed mind. What would be the chance of persons thus preoccupied profiting by the exercises, if subjected to the yet further inroad of other interests and excitements, from the occurrence of intervals of conversation? The result is wholly different, when opportunity is given to open the soul's grief or difficulties to one who may console by his sympathy, or guide with discretion, applying, as need may be, religious aid or Sacramental healing, which is provided for in the charge entrusted to the director of the retreat, whose counsel is calculated to be all the more helpful, because of the very restriction which confines all interchange of thought to communication with himself.

It should be observed also that reading any suitable book

is allowable in a retreat, and quite in accord with its objects ; and the strain of meditation or of pondering one's own thoughts may at any time be relieved by this resource ; the only necessity is to confine reading to spiritual books, and to check merely visionary thoughts, or avoid controversial or unpractical study.

III. Objections are also sometimes made to the character of the addresses delivered in retreats, as implying a familiarity with the habit of meditation beyond the average capacities of those who are addressed, and so leaving behind little profit. Such a difficulty may be felt, when mental prayer and spiritual contemplation have been but little practised. Persons desiring the benefits of a retreat may come with little aptitude for fully entering into the course of the exercises ; still less for employing their own minds on the subjects given, when left to themselves to meditate on them. But is such a possibility to be wholly avoided in the case of beginners ? It is but the objection made by Laud to the discredit of Jeremy Taylor, when he first preached before him at Lambeth—that he was “too young a preacher to remain in London ;” and the reply may be given with equal force as in Taylor's answer ; “He humbly begged his grace to pardon that fault promising that if he lived he would amend it” (Heber's “Life of Bishop Jeremy Taylor,” vol. i. p. 11). A similar objection is often urged against sermons ; but it is not always felt advisable to lower the standard of thought in preaching. A growing experience gives both to the speaker and the hearer increasing power of mutual understanding—to the one, through knowing better the wants and capacities of his brethren ; to the other, through being able to follow out more intelligently the suggested heads of spiritual reflection. None can doubt the great loss incurred by lack of use in an exercise considered by all masters of the spiritual life to be more influential than any other in furthering the advancement of the soul,

and nothing but practice can instruct either the teacher or the taught. But there seems no remedy for the difficulty complained of, except increased experience ; and the end is surely worth the effort to attain. We are but at the commencement of a system, and we must be content to bear the unavoidable imperfections attending the early endeavours to achieve success in so great a cause.

IV. But a yet more important scruple may weigh with many thoughtful persons. It is sometimes found that, while a first retreat has been accompanied by sensible emotions, and an appreciable gain in the after-life, a repetition of the same practice has been followed by little, if any, apparent benefit. The life has seemed to receive no perceptible additional stimulus ; or, at least, the effects were of so unnoticeable a character, that the result can hardly be regarded as adequate to the exertion and loss of time incurred.

The true answer to this objection is to be found in questioning the view of life on which the objection rests. A first retreat, like the first consciousness of a call from GOD, necessarily produces a vividly sensible impression, and a greater contrast to previous experience than any after influence of the same kind can be expected to effect. The result will necessarily be more apparent, where the work of the Spirit has been felt for the first time. The later operations of GOD within the soul are less cognizable than the earlier ; they are also ordinarily slower and more secret. Each separate period of increased attainment has less of self-consciousness in proportion to the degree of the attainment, less of emotion excited, and less therefore of perceptible advance. But the impression made may be really as great, or greater. The most material work of the soul, like the ordinary developments of nature, consists in silent progress and quiet increase, arising from ever-repeated and renewed impressions, it may be of the *same* or like truths. The steady unobserved deepening of

spiritual convictions is really a greater work than the awakening the first fresh emotions. In a constantly advancing course, the very least gain is the reaching a higher level ; and in climbing heights, the last approaches towards the summit appear to rise with a far less perceptible elevation in proportion as the distance decreases. We cannot measure results by impressions, nor are sensible improvements any guide to the actual progress of the soul's life. As GOD'S gracious gifts flow on, the currents may often be the stiller from their very depth. Retreats resemble other religious exercises in this, that they are often more a work of faith than of consciousness ; but they have not therefore less of GOD, neither are they less hopeful for the future. The answer to the objection, in fact, opens a very important view in the discipline of the interior life. In the early stages of spiritual attainment, it is necessary to be dwelling perhaps chiefly on the past, and on the present as compared with the past. But as the onward steps are made good, and the progress more or less steadily maintained, the soul learns to live more in the future, more by faith and hope, more in the anticipations of what may be attained, and as life is more elevated as it rises to this conception of its true life, so it becomes calmer, less conscious of immediate effects, and less dependent on them. The effect of a retreat upon the soul thus advancing onwards is necessarily less marked, but not less effectual in deepening and quickening all heavenly impressions and powers ripening for eternity.

V. Not unlike to the feeling which dictates the last objection is that which disposes busy men, especially clergymen, to regard retreats as of slight moment, when contrasted with calls of active duty. Earnest parish priests compare their work at home, and its influence on their people, with retirement for spiritual repose ; and it seems to be the putting a mere sentiment, and one indulged for their own sake alone, in the place of devoted service. Their minds are already fully

absorbed in spiritual things; and to listen to the addresses given in retreats, is but a repetition, though it may be under more impressive circumstances, of what, more or less, forms the staple of their constant studies. Their life has already but one fixed aim. If change is needed, it were better that it were a real refreshment, such as would send them back to their work reinvigorated by an entire relaxation from all mental effort. The retreat is but another form of spiritual exertion, intended to effect what is already making more or less of progress in the soul, in the appointed path of duty.

An answer to such a line of thought is to be found in what has already been said of the nature and object of a retreat. We have seen that its purpose is to bring to bear on the soul a wholly new force, in order to endue it with fresh energies, both for its own advancing heavenly-mindedness, and its greater usefulness. Previous remarks will have anticipated much of this objection.

But it is an important consideration, whether the main ground of this supposed objection be not an exaggerated view of the active, in comparison with the contemplative life. The training of the inner life of our priesthood has manifestly not been cared for as it deserves. A certain amount of theological knowledge, and the absence of any positive bar on the score of morality and general orthodoxy, are the sole tests of fitness which it has been considered necessary to secure in a candidate for ordination. The training of the mind itself in habits of prayer, of meditation, of self-discipline, has in too many cases been comparatively neglected, or at least left to chance. Taken as a class, there is no clerical body in Christendom so little trained as our own. Even ministers of some of the Dissenting communities have had a far more distinctive preparation than the clergy of the Church of England. Our public schools and universities lay an admirable basis of moral character which need not fear comparison with any system of

education of a similar kind in the world ; but, except in the case of the few Diocesan colleges established within the last few years, nothing is provided with the view of imparting a distinctive character, or special aptitude, to the future priest. It is evident, even now, after the efforts made to recover lost ground, that candidates trained at our Diocesan colleges bear an almost infinitesimal proportion to the number of the ordained. Speaking with scarcely any appreciable exception, the education of our clergy differs in no respect from that of the laity. Those who are to guide and teach their brethren in the mysteries and discipline of the supernatural life, have but little more preparation for their work than those over whom they are about to be set.

This great lack of spiritual training at the commencement of a clergyman's course cannot but tell upon the general estimate of such discipline, and tend to produce an indifference to, or even an undervaluing of, merely spiritual exercises. If it be thought needless at the commencement, as a test and means of fitness, why should it be more necessary afterwards, when the priest is already accepted as sufficient for his work ? The result of such indifference to this material part of the priestly life has been, that intellectual gifts and general activity have assumed a disproportionate value in the established view of the character of our clergy, an estimate manifestly fatal to any adequate cherishing of purely spiritual attainments, on the due development of which the saintly and devotional character depends. No doubt there is serious evil in the formation of a mere sacerdotal caste ; a form of character shaped after a fixed and uniform type, having little sympathy with laymen, nor allowing freedom for the healthful development of the mind. This is fully allowed. But to argue as if there were risk of such a result in our case would be, to say the least, an extreme supposition, and one that could hardly excite reasonable fear. We are evidently suffering

from defect as to any training whatever of a spiritual kind for distinctly spiritual work, so far as the Church's provisions and requirements are concerned. A ministry, which is to impress on the world not merely a spirit of benevolence, and laws of morality, nor merely a doctrine and a faith, but the very Mind of CHRIST, ought to have, underlying and infusing all ministerial activities, all intellectual gifts, an inner life, disciplined by habitual intercourse with the unseen world, and quickened and ruled by whatever means can be brought to bear on its development. It is not enough to say that this inner growth must, after all, depend on the grace of GOD, and the work of His SPIRIT, which may be obtained through secret prayer and private study, and the heart's own communing with GOD in a man's own chamber; and must rest on every man's own individual care of his own soul. All this is freely allowed. The only point here urged is that such an end may be greatly furthered by special means; and the question to be considered is, whether the use of means of acknowledged efficacy for the end in view, ought not to fall within the order of the Church's discipline in the education of those on whose fitness for the charge, under GOD, hangs the whole hope of her ministrations of the Gospel of CHRIST—whether aids of acknowledged efficacy for ensuring this needful personal care, and assisting these individual efforts to attain a spiritual and saintly mind, ought not to form a special object in the training and discipline provided for the priesthood. Some recognized system calculated to direct and deepen the operations of the Spirit in those whose whole calling and object is centred in the things of the Spirit, surely is but a reasonable requirement.

If, however, but little provision is made amongst us in the preparation for the ministry, all the more needful must be any practice which gives promise of supplying the lack afterwards. Retreats profess to furnish such a means. Experience proves *them* to have a very real influence in giving a substantial

reality to unseen things. They tend to form a mind conversant with the inner life of the spirit, and thus to spiritualize the character; cherishing, by a peculiar concentration of the purest and most powerful influences, the very mind which the priest is bound to cultivate, if he is to be the embodiment of the life of CHRIST to the world. It must press unceasingly on the heart of every faithful pastor of souls to think of his own state before GOD, even though his whole energies may be bent on the one aim of preparing his people to meet their last account. Thou hast "made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard I have not kept" (Cant. i. 6), are words which must often haunt the conscience of such a man with anxious misgivings. The proffering, therefore, of any means which may, at the same time, both test and deepen the life of his own soul in the search after such an end, can never be lightly put aside by the minister of GOD as of little moment.

VI. The answer given to the last objection, though applicable to all alike—for the life of contemplation is an essential feature of the Christian life, and in measure must needs enter as a component part into all true forms of Christianity—had special reference to the clergy. That what is influential in disciplining and advancing the interior life is of primary importance to those who minister to others, for others' sake scarcely less than for their own, renders it necessary to press more especially on the attention of the clergy the advantages of retreats. It may be well therefore to add here some other reasons in favour of the practice, specially affecting them.

The ceaseless pressure of daily work and the constant distractions of infinitely varied calls, which form the habitual life of so many priests in large parishes; the manifold interruptions besetting even those who occupy retired spheres of labour; the drain upon their hearts and minds from the constant giving out of themselves for others' needs; the un-

avoidable tendency to view religious truth as affecting others in a kind of business way ; and the manifest danger of what is professional becoming mechanical and perfunctory, what is constant and habitual losing its freshness and vital personal interest : or, again, the effects of domestic and social engagements, and lighter claims, even of lawful and unavoidable intercourse with the outer world, diminishing the energy, and dulling the keen, vivid sense of the invisible world, which is the groundwork of the earnestness and concentrated grasp of truth so essential to a minister of the Word of GOD : or, again, the tendency in those whose lot is comparatively isolated, to become morbid and absorbed in partial views or exaggerated prepossessions, to whom new and vivid impressions from other minds would be specially reinvigorating ; or, the mere risk of degenerating in spiritual earnestness besetting all, but in some respects peculiarly affecting those who, from being always ministering to others, are never themselves placed under the influences which they feel so needful for every one else—such are some of the reasons which naturally occur as generally applicable.

Again the circumstances of our own time suggest reasons peculiar to itself. The controversial habit of the day, and the ceaseless conflict of opinion ; the rapid succession of new ideas on questions of deepest and most exciting interest ; the stir, the movement, the increasing activity of everything around us,—are additional reasons why every means of encouraging calmness and a restful spirit, and the power of viewing truth in its inner depths and simplicity, irrespective of accidental circumstances, must be valuable.

All such considerations tend to show the immense importance to a priest of being placed from time to time in a position where the mere activities of his ministry, the common lines of thought, the surrounding interests and anxieties, the *claims* of those depending upon him, are altogether removed,

and himself brought face to face with GOD in his own personal individual consciousness, as he must at last appear to give account of himself when he will no longer be the judge of other men, but himself be judged ; and this all the more strictly, because he has ventured to tread the innermost sanctuary of the Most High GOD.

Moreover, retreats must ever have the closest affinity with the priestly character. They are the natural expressions of such a life when relieved of the necessities of outward service. The true life of a priest ever tends to the more absorbed and intimate communion with unseen things, and retreats are the recurring satisfaction of the unceasing desire. A life resting wholly on spiritual realities, and yet subject to the external influences which work, often of the most absorbing and unceasing character, involves, needs above others to be sustained by the periodical presentation of the objects of faith in their most impressive form. Priests, as such, are necessarily liable, like others, to the decline and decay which besets all forms of spiritual life in this world, in its struggle to maintain its true standard ; and the refreshment and reviving power which the exercises of a retreat supply, is the means which most effectually supplies the need.

VII. The value of retreats also to laymen, desirous of maintaining a high standard of life, and seeking opportunity to break away from the trammels and entanglements of outward things, that they may devote themselves to a more pure and undivided life, is in many respects equally manifest. It has already been observed that the principles of the contemplative life form a necessary ingredient in Christianity, and must enter more or less into all conditions of true life. This is readily allowed in the case of persons specially devoted to religion, but it is hardly sufficiently considered in the case of those who are necessarily absorbed in the ordinary business of life. But Christianity is essentially a life of

faith, sustained, fed, and developed only by faith, and faith can grow and be supported only by the Spirit of GOD illuminating the soul through the vision of eternal things, embraced and loved as its true, its only real and enduring life. To cherish and preserve this state of inward illumination, to form and deepen the impression, on which depend the strength and growth of a Christian life, is therefore of vital importance. And how can this fitly be done amidst the ceaseless claims and distractions of the world? At least the difficulties are so great that every help is needed, and every counteracting force of value, to repair the loss of spirituality caused by the continual contact with the world, and recruit the mind worn by the conflict, or perhaps deteriorated by its influence. Men in business, women with their domestic worries, must more especially feel the need of opportunities of retirement. Those who without any special claims of duty are yet living in the midst of the innumerable calls of society and the trivial round of ordinary occupations, innocent it may be in themselves, yet exacting in their demands and wearing in their frequency, cannot but long at times for spiritual repose and time for reflection. Nor can such persons, if at all seriously inclined, be without fear of possible grievous loss to their souls from the inability to find what they need in their own homes. They cannot fly from themselves, nor escape from the network of engagements with which they are encompassed. To such persons a retreat offers the very provision suited to their need. For thus may be ensured an entire seclusion from outward hindrances, combined with such teaching as is best calculated to promote the full realization of the objects of faith, which are the proper means for bringing to bear the powers of religion upon their souls. The influence of sermons and other ordinary ministrations must always be marred by a defect of power, because the impressions made are so liable to be obliterated by the rapidly succeeding ideas prevailing

in the outer world, to which the hearer must immediately return; or by the mere instinctive reaction of the mind itself after a transient excitement. Time secured from all possible interruptions, and relief from all outward pressure and the constant play of ordinary associations, are needed for such self-reflection as is calculated to produce fixed and permanent results. And where, except in a retreat, is there any security for such advantages?

It is important to add, more especially when referring to the case of lay persons, actively engaged, that the principle of retreats is of an elastic character. We have been dwelling on the systematic mode of carrying them out, without which indeed the full benefits contemplated in retreats cannot be looked for. But some measure of a similar result may be obtained by a less formal arrangement. Such, for instance, is the plan, which has been attended with very happy results, of giving addresses at certain hours in a church, with fixed periods for meditation after each address, while the rest of the day has been given up to necessary avocations. This method is especially suitable to those who are unable to be absent from home except for a few hours in the day; or whose business is too pressing to be left except for short intervals. In this case, equally as in a regular retreat, the addresses are best given by a single instructor, capable of supplying spiritual guidance in private to any who desire it.

A remarkable instance of this kind of quasi-retreat is recorded in the "*Memoirs of Père Ravignan*." It was an experiment made at the close of one of his Lenten services at *Nôtre Dame*, in Paris, and formed a striking era in his ministry. The first retreat which he gave was for men only. It was repeated the following year, when, on the same day, he held one retreat for men, another for women, and a third for the poor. There was but one address given at each; but as might have been expected, Père Ravignan felt the strain

caused by such an effort too great to be repeated. It may be interesting to read his own account of the effect of one portion of his scheme, which could not but form a crisis in a nation's religious history: "The conferences were listened to with the usual goodwill and attention. The idea of closing them with a retreat had occurred to me five years before, almost at the beginning of my conferences in Nôtre Dame. But until now the time had not seemed sufficiently favourable. This year, towards the middle of Lent, I asked, and obtained full liberty from the archbishop. It seemed prudent to say nothing beforehand, and to begin in a small church. I was permitted the use of the Abbaye aux Bois, which, by close packing, was capable of containing from a thousand to twelve hundred persons, and I also secured, in case of overcrowding, the large and beautiful church of S. Eustache. I had been refused Saint Sulpice. It was not till Palm Sunday, just before the conference at Nôtre Dame, that I gave notice of a retreat for men to take place in Holy Week, and an instruction every evening at eight o'clock till Holy Thursday inclusive. On Monday evening I went to the Abbaye aux Bois towards half-past seven. I found an immense crowd, not a single woman; I had excluded them. The church had been full nearly two hours, and already about a hundred persons had gone away, unable to get in. I wished to cross the lower part of the church, but I could not pass. I was recognized. The people begged me eagerly, though quietly, to go to a larger church. I promised to do so. From the pulpit I was greatly struck by this throng of men, almost all young, crowding even up to the altars, yet without disorder. After having warmly congratulated them, I told them to go the next evening to S. Eustache. Then I desired them to rise for prayer. They rose like one man. We said the 'Veni Creator'; and the instruction was given on these words: '*Venite seorsum, et requiescite pusillum.*' I requested them to

remain for Benediction. All remained. Next day S. Eustache began to fill at three o'clock for the eight o'clock service, and on the following days people came even sooner. My heart is full of gratitude to GOD; His help has been manifest. I do not know whether such a congregation of men has ever been seen before; men hung on the gratings of the doors, the projections of the pillars, the screens of the chapels; nave and transepts were crowded to excess, and the deepest, the most religious silence prevailed. Yet there was no disorder, no violent pressure, though three or four thousand men's voices were singing the 'Miserere' and the 'Stabat Mater.' The sight has touched me profoundly." ("Vie du R. P. Ravignan," vol. i. p. 204.)

In what has been urged as to the effects of this great means of spiritual edification, it is not meant to be implied that it is advisable for all persons under all circumstances or states of mind. Caution is needed as to the use of any special means of devotion, especially those of a deeply stirring character. There are both physical and mental states, which might render such an exercise hurtful rather than beneficial; but these are exceptions which cannot affect the general conclusions at which we have arrived. They are mentioned here, lest it should be supposed that there had been any disregard for doubts or scruples felt by those who, having a common object in view, are yet drawn to GOD more in accordance with their own mental condition through other means. Such cases may be fully recognized without in the least diminishing the force of the arguments advanced. They are clearly exceptional. The objection may also be exceptional depending on some temporary hindrance in the case of those who are thus affected; and retreats which may be unadvisable at one period of life, or under special circumstances, as, for instance, in states of weakened health or overwrought

sensitiveness, may be most beneficial on the return of fuller strength, or of calmer and more healthful feelings.

It is not wholly unimportant to consider the questions of time and place for holding retreats.

As to place—a college or a religious house with its chapel, or a quiet country parsonage with a church close at hand, seem to be the fittest places for such an object. Seclusion, facility of access to a chapel or one's private chamber, are the main requisites. If the freshness of country air, and freedom of a retired haunt with its uninterrupted walks, is added, we have all that can be desired. A church alone, in which the attendants at a retreat, going to and fro from **their** own homes, can find, for a time at least, during the day, entire isolation from the world, is all that can often be secured in the case of those who are unable to leave their own sphere of occupations and daily duties, and will enable such persons to gain all the benefits of such an exercise practicable in their case.

The season of the year must depend on the probable leisure of those for whom the retreat is designed, or of him who directs it. For the clergy, the summer or autumn is freer from pressing work than other seasons, and has far less risk of interference with the more urgent claims of duty. That the weather at such times is more favourable for relaxation and refreshment, is not without its benefit.

For lay persons, seasons such as Advent, the Epiphany, or Lent, seem most suitable, because the association of the Church's commemorative services gives additional weight to the devotional exercises. The mind is instinctively acted upon by the influence of the time, and is more predisposed to receive the intended impressions.

Something has already been said as to the length of time during which the retreat is to last. It is only the pressure of *the many* avocations, ever tending to increase, in such an age

of restless activity as that in which our lot is cast, which has fixed the limits hitherto observed in our retreats. Three clear days is as much as has been felt practicable, with but one or two rare exceptions. But the length of period will probably increase as the practice spreads, and becomes, as we can hardly doubt it will become, a more recognized part of our religious system. The arrangements of life and work will be made with a view to such periodical retirements. Irrespective of the limits unavoidably fixed by necessary duties, the object in view would determine the time. Abstractedly such a period is to be desired as would allow for the fullest possible impression being made, without incurring the risk of weariness or hurtful strain to the mental powers.

The order of the day is also a point of considerable practical importance, but one that must necessarily depend on the circumstances of each individual case. A time-table, to which all who attend the retreat may have ready access, is a further requirement; and exactness in observing the directions given, is essential for success. A specimen Table is subjoined with the view of illustrating the order generally pursued; though, if applied to actual use, it may require some modifications to adapt it to particular circumstances. A set of Rules, also (originally published as a leaflet, but condensed), drawn up for the assistance of persons about to attend a retreat, has been added, as giving in a brief compass a further insight into the practical application of the principles which, more or less fully, have been set forth in the foregoing pages. These details may form a not unfit conclusion to such principles.

T. T. CARTER.

TIME TABLE FOR A RETREAT OF THREE DAYS.

EVENING OF ARRIVAL.

6.0. p.m. Evensong in Church.		
7.0. „ Tea or Supper.		lowed by an hour's meditation.
7.30. „ Vespers, and Introductory Address in Chapel: fol-	9.30. p.m. Compline; and retire for the night.	

EACH DAY OF RETREAT.

5.30. a.m. Rise.		1.0. p.m. Dinner: after which Recreation Time.
6.15. „ Lauds, Prime, and Preparation for Holy Communion in Chapel.		4.0. „ Nones in Chapel, and Second Address: followed by an hour's meditation.
7.0. „ Holy Communion, and Thanksgiving.		6.0. „ Evensong in Church.
8.0. „ Breakfast.		7.0. „ Tea or Supper.
9.0. „ Matins in Church.		7.30. „ Vespers, and Third Address: followed by an hour's meditation.
10.0. „ Terce in Chapel, and First Address: followed by an hour's meditation.		9.30. „ Compline; and retire for the night.
12.0. noon. Sext: followed by a short Instruction.		

MORNING OF DEPARTURE.

5.30. a.m. Rise.		8.0. a.m. Breakfast.
6.15. „ Lauds, Prime, and Preparation for Holy Communion in Chapel.		9.0. „ Matins in Church.
7.0. „ Holy Communion and Thanksgiving.		10.0. „ Terce in Chapel, and Concluding Address; followed by an hour's meditation.

INSTRUCTION FOR RETREATS.

1. The many difficulties of the Christian life, and the besetting hindrances of the world, call from time to time for special enabling Grace. This must be sought by unusual means. A yearly Retreat is the most effective of such means.

2. A Retreat demands, on the part of those who enter it, certain dispositions to fit them for it. Of these, the chief are, either a deep sense of the worthlessness of earthly things, with a great desire to turn to GOD; or some light or impulse from GOD which leads to a longing after a reformation of life, and interior sanctification; or a keen sense of sin moving the soul to its inmost depths, with a longing for satisfactory penitence; in fact, some strong drawing of the soul by GOD towards solitude, where it may find Him.

3. A Retreat is this *Solitude*.

4. Each Retreat ought to raise the soul to a higher level, a more perfect walk with GOD, in which it may by His Grace persevere, until the Retreat of the next year takes it up at that point, and advances it a further step heavenwards.

5. We come to a Retreat to ask ourselves three questions: i. What is the state of my soul before GOD? ii. What does GOD's Grace require of me? iii. How may I fulfil the demands of Grace?

6. A Retreat does not teach us new truths; but puts us in such relation to GOD, that, in old truths, the HOLY GHOST reveals to us a new view of our life.

7. We may come to a Retreat with a design to change our whole mode of life, in order to a higher order of holiness; or we may enter it simply to consider the state of our souls and examine carefully whether we are in the way of salvation; whether we are in any way risking our eternal inheritance; whether we have any change to make before we dare to die.

8. We must by all means give ourselves *wholly* to the work of the Retreat, to the total exclusion of all else. We must be *alone* with GOD.

9. It must be a time of *perfect solitude*. I. Exterior: 1. In neither writing nor receiving letters. 2. In reading no books which do not bear on the spiritual life. 3. In avoiding all companionship. 4. By speaking to no one without necessity. II. Interior: 1. By putting away all thought of work. 2. By checking at once every wandering thought, however harmless.

10. Cultivate simplicity of desire and intention, and be exact in keeping rules.

11. Before Retreat: I. Excite great desire of solitude. II. Go to Confession.

III. Join in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice and receive Communion with the intention of its success. IV. Read carefully over the Profession of your Purpose, that you may sign it with a firm will before GOD.¹

¹ "I . . . humbly profess before Almighty GOD that I join this Retreat, moved thereto by an earnest desire to live more nearly to Him, and to know and fulfil His will. I believe firmly: 1. That I exist only for Him. 2. That I live to praise, honour, serve, and love Him, and for nothing else. 3. That I was born by nature in the likeness of fallen Adam. 4. That I was new-born by Grace in Holy Baptism, and thereby restored to the likeness of GOD Incarnate. [5. That I was called to the ministry, that I might fulfil the end of my being more perfectly, and that specially for the salvation of souls.] 6. That I am fed continually with my GOD in the Holy Eucharist, that I may have His power, in which to serve Him. 7. That I must soon die; and be judged according to the perfection of this work alone. Therefore I offer myself to Him in this Retreat, to hear His voice, and obey it simply—to hear it in dryness or in consolation, and to fulfil it by life or by death. So help me GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Signed by me, kneeling in the Presence of GOD"

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12. Listen to the Meditations as to that teaching which GOD wills you to hear now. Check all criticism. Consider them (kneeling if possible) in Church or in the quiet of your own room. Be sure to bring them home to yourself.

13. An "Instruction" is sometimes given in the middle of the day, instead of a Meditation. This is an exposition of some point bearing upon the meditations. It should be listened to, as throwing light upon them.

14. During the Retreat, make a solemn Resolution, as the immediate fruit of it. This Resolution ought to be the doing of some one *definite* act ; or the giving up of some one *definite* practice, pursuit, or habit ; or to aim at the extirpation of some one *definite* fault of thought or action. Consult the Conductor about it ; write it down in the form given.¹

15. "Free-time" is that for which no definite work is assigned. It may be spent in spiritual reading, or in self-examination.

16. At meals, eat to supply your body with needful strength, not for self-indulgence. Take, as far as possible, what is offered you. If you need anything, ask for it without affected constraint.

17. The reading at meals is for edification, not merely to occupy a time of silence. Do not be so much occupied with food as to be unable to attend.

18. Recreation may be spent in a solitary walk ; or in bodily rest, if needful ; or in interesting but not light reading. It does not break the silence.

19. In Self-Examination ; apply the points of the Meditations searchingly to your own life.

20. Make very carefully your Private Devotions. Join devoutly in the Offices for the Hours. Say with great reverence the Daily Office. Regard your daily Communion as the great channel of Grace and Illumination.

21. Bestow especial care upon the earlier Exercises, to learn mistrust of self.

22. Have great indifference as to the apparent success of the Retreat. Be quite ready to pass the time in dryness and seeming desolation. We deserve nothing else. If GOD send it, the days will be days of penance : let them also be days of patience, and they will be no loss.

23. Come simply to be taught of GOD, and to do that which He teaches you. Trust Him implicitly. You are here by His Grace. He will not forsake you.

24. You are weary—the hours are long—the rules are hard—your soul grows exhausted at the Meditations. Do not mind it : take courage : persevere : GOD will help you.

25. Tell your difficulties humbly to the Conductor. Follow his advice, even if you doubt his wisdom. GOD will bless it.

26. After Retreat gather up in your mind your special practical resolutions. Take them out with you to your work, to be acted upon at once.

27. If you have made a confession in Retreat, go back to your own Director as soon as possible.

28. At your next Communion remember the Conductor ; and then generally pray for the result of the Retreat, in the sanctification of all present, and in the glory of GOD.

¹ I, . . . , having been called by GOD'S Grace into Retreat, do solemnly resolve as follows, with the advice of the Conductor : . . . By means of this Resolution I desire to consecrate myself and my work to the Glory of Almighty GOD. So help me GOD, through JESUS CHRIST. Signed by me, kneeling in the Presence of GOD, . . .

Studies in Modern Problems.

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT.

THE course of events in this world is inevitably tending towards one point where the great contest is eventually to take place. Signs of the times are gradually but clearly showing that two opposing lines of thought, parallel to each other, and therefore impossible to coalesce, are advancing rapidly forward; and that to each of these lines of thought will the thinking portion of men attach themselves; and then will come the final contest. These lines will not be belief and unbelief, not Christianity and Atheism, but will be two incompatible phases of religion. It is a mistake to suppose that the world is opposed to religion generally, that it wants to escape from all bonds of belief. It does want a religion, only it must be one of its own devising, one suited to its temper and habits. A striking proof of this fact may be observed in the history of the heathen nations, which are broadly, though not with strict accuracy, designated Greece and Rome, at the time when the Christian Faith was first published. All belief in the old gods of Olympus and Etruria had died out among the thoughtful and educated, and were supplanted by various systems of philosophy; yet this did not satisfy the mind of men. A want was felt of some kind, homage to some one or some thing above them, something objective, some visible embodiment of power, something great, huge, irresistible: and that which presented these features was the all-conquering Roman Empire. There was

something apparently superhuman about this gigantic institution, which suggested a divinity within it. A genius of the Empire was conceived; and so homage, perhaps worship, was paid to this mighty divinity. Still this did not satisfy the mind. There must be an embodiment of the genius. So the man, who for the moment held in his hands the directing of all the forces of the Empire, and the exercising of its tremendous powers, in a word, the Emperor, became naturally the object of worship. He might be philosopher, like Antoninus, or a monster of cruelty and caprice, like Nero or Domitian. It mattered not. He alone wielded the irresistible might of the Empire. He was the ruler of the world. As such he was the impersonation of all power on earth. So, when the citizens of Rome paid worship to the genius of the Empire, they did it to the person of him who then held that power almost irresponsibly. If he were dethroned, or even assassinated—it only affected the man who held the power—that still remained; it merely passed into the hands of another, who might, or might not, resemble the last.

So it has ever been, and so it is now. The world will have its religion. If it reject the one given by Revelation, it will frame and fashion another of its own. If it worship not the One CREATOR and REDEEMER, it will make its own idols, and worship them. These two contradictory phases of religion we shall designate by the names of Catholic and Protestant. By the former we mean that divine Revelation given by our LORD and the HOLY SPIRIT to the Church; that sacred deposit of which she was appointed the keeper and the witness, and which it is her mission to declare to the world. By the other, that theological and philosophical system or systems, invented by man within the last three hundred years—systems which, while they all profess to be drawn from the written revelation contained in those writings which we term *the Sacred Scriptures*, yet betray their human origin by

their diversities and contradictions. Each system, whether Lutheran, Calvinistic, Socinian, Mormonite, or Shaker, while it professes to be founded on the Bible, nay, to be the only true interpretation of the Bible, is, in truth, only the reflection of the mind of the human founder: they all are essentially human inventions and human systems. The apparent success of these religions is thus easily accounted for. They belong to the spirit of the world; they assimilate with human-nature; they please the natural man; while, at the same time, they profess to have, and make an appearance of having, divine authority, for each appeals to the Bible. The world wishes to have a religion, but it wishes to have one of its own making, in accordance with its present phase of thought and temper: at the same time it is equally desirous of having impressed upon it the stamp of divine authority. While it is its own, it deceives itself, and tries to deceive others into believing that it is from GOD, and comes with authority. It was so of old. All idolatry, all false worship, all heathen systems profess to have their origin in the will or revelation of the gods, or of divinely commissioned men. It was this feeling that caused the Israelites to compel Aaron to make a calf—they would not do it themselves, it must be done by GOD'S High Priest—so as to have authority for the act, and to deceive themselves by the appearance of authority, that what they wished was right. It is this that makes the Protestants accept the decisions of the Privy Council. They know that they are wrong, opposed both to law and fact; but they have the show of authority. The calf is made of Protestant gold and silver; but it was cast by Aaron: an Archbishop sanctioned it. A careful observer will perceive that this Aaron has stripped them of their clothes, that their shame may appear to all.

Another feature in the case we must also carefully observe which, while it proves the human origin of the religion,

makes it more subtle, and less easy to be grasped; and that is, that its phases change with the opinions, habits, and feelings of the age. The Lutheran of to-day is as unlike Lutheran of the sixteenth century as it is possible to be. Calvinism, in Calvin's own seat, has degenerated into Socinianism. The modern Nonconformist is a very different being from his ancestor, who fought under the banner of Cromwell.

Yet even the Protestantism of to-day is not the final development of its principles. Change is still going on, but we can foresee the Protestantism of the future: it is being moulded into a new form under modern social, and political principles. In older days men were ready to kill, or to be killed, in defence of some favourite dogma like Predestination and Reprobation. They thought it the duty of the civil magistrate to draw his sword against those who opposed them, and to thrust into prison the men of contrary opinions. Nay, the very form of government which the sect to which they belonged should assume, was no less a matter for compulsion, or even for persecution. The Protestant of the nineteenth century, on the contrary, now bends his efforts to suppress dogma, and to establish an "Undenominational Christianity." He has so completely shifted his ground and taken up a new position, that no one could recognise him as the descendant of Baxter and Calamy. Dogmas, which the latter would have died to maintain, are to be for ever banished from public schools. Forms of so-called Church government are to be for ever buried in the tomb of all the Capulets. How are the mighty fallen! Would not those determined Establishmentarians, the Puritan divines of the seventeenth century, have repudiated their degenerate descendants of this, had they seen the crusade which is now preached against every form of Establishment, which they so strenuously defended by the unanswerable argument of sword and cannon?

Would they not have branded as traitors and apostates those who would reduce all forms of religion to a dead and monotonous level?¹

We may give a passing notice, as a sign of the times, yet as not deserving of any particular attention, to the proposed union of extreme men in the Church with Protestants outside it, under the leadership of Lords Shaftesbury and Ebury, for the purpose of making war upon the Church's faith and worship; in which association we notice with sorrow, though not with surprise, the names of some who have received Holy Orders, and have professed their adherence to the Church's faith and worship. We may thus see in what direction the Protestantism of the future is drifting. First, to an indifference to the faith once delivered to the saints as professed in the Church, and the setting-up of some human dogmas as essential to salvation. Secondly, the combination of men of opposing opinions and diversities of belief to overthrow the Church of CHRIST and her faith. We may add that, to all appearance, the only bond of unity which exists among Protestants is antagonism to the Church, or to some truth in the Church. It is this, probably, more than anything else, that holds together such a heterogeneous body as the "Bible Society," and enables its members to keep the peace one toward another. We firmly believe that the idea that the dissemination of the Bible in various languages is the great power to meet the claims of the Catholic Church, and to overcome them, goes a long way in preserving amity among

¹ On looking over this last sentence, we have some doubts of its strict accuracy. The Birmingham League not only professes to have a religion, which it denotes under the term "Undenominational Christianity," but seeks to enforce it upon the whole country by the power of the law. This new form of religion it would have taught in all elementary schools, and would not only pay the teacher for teaching it, but would prevent him from teaching any other. Surely this is setting up an Established Religion, and not only setting it up, but also endowing it out of the public revenue!

the members of that Society, and in preventing them from disagreeing among themselves, and separating into sections.

Directly opposed to all this uncertainty and change in religion, this shifting of opinion, this adopting of the spirit of the age, is the Catholic Faith; that one faith, settled by councils, or confirmed by universal use, which the undivided Church of the first seven centuries held and enunciated, and which the whole Catholic Church retains to this day. This faith, our own portion of the Church, that which we understand by the term "Anglican," was happily endorsed in the first general Council of that body, as "the Faith in its purity and integrity, as taught in the Holy Scriptures, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General (Œcumenical) Councils" ("Resolutions of the Lambeth Conference," 1867). It is between these two that the contest lies. The struggle is now going on, and, we venture to predict, will increase in intensity as each side becomes more and more convinced of its importance, and of the inevitable consequences which must result from its maintenance, or its rejection.

This, however, does not at all exhaust the matter of difference between the Catholic and the Protestant. The Catholic Faith is something more than a written creed; and the holding of the Catholic Faith involves a great deal more than a bare acceptance of its truth. The creeds are the platforms which are necessary to the building-up of the Church; but they are not the edifice itself. They are the field; but the field must be cultivated in order to bear fruit. And so that great creed, which was so lately the bone of contention between Catholic and Protestant, authoritatively declares: "The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship One GOD in TRINITY, and TRINITY in UNITY." It is true that the question of dogma comes in; and here appears the unapproachable difference between Catholic and Protestant. The

former insists on dogma, and that dogma be precisely laid down in formulas, and openly confessed by the Church. The latter would abolish dogma, and rest himself in a general Christianity. The struggle for the maintenance of the Creed of S. Athanasius, lately—may we not hope—settled at the great meeting in S. James's Hall, was really to decide whether the Church should teach dogma, or whether it should leave the greater part of the Catholic Faith an open question. The plea of the Protestant is plausible, because it suits itself to the notions of the present age. To such dogmas as the Creed of S. Athanasius teaches on the TRINITY and the Incarnation, he objects, they are not found in the Bible, they are the invention of the Church in the fourth and fifth centuries, they were not thus taught by our LORD or His Apostles. It is not needful, therefore, to teach them now—certainly not to make the holding of them necessary to salvation. Besides, such minute distinctions are unnecessary; for if a man believe in GOD, and in CHRIST, and in the Atonement, what more is required? such subtle distinctions only distract and worry. Then we have the usual platitudes, amongst others, about breadth and charity; the inclusive nature of the Gospel and the Church; and the harsh and uncharitable character of the Creed.

We shall answer these objections best by pointing out the absolute necessity for dogma—a necessity which forced itself on the Church in the fourth century, and continued until the Catholic Faith was formally settled in the eighth. In regard to the objection that these truths were not taught by the Apostles, we have simply to reply that we have recorded such a small portion of what they taught, that it is impossible to argue from their silence. That such dogmas do not occur in the records we possess, we readily admit; but we utterly deny that such records contain the whole revelation of the faith once delivered to the saints—this point will be treated more fully later on. What we are at present concerned with is to

show the necessity for the Church to insist on teaching dogma.

On the first foundation of the Church, it was only necessary to express a belief in the Incarnate SON of GOD. Such a profession included everything, because there was no doubt and no dispute as to the Person of CHRIST. But when heretics arose, then the doctrine of the Person of CHRIST must be defined. This definition is dogma. It was not enough then to confess, as the Ethiopian eunuch did, "I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD," for heretics did this. It must be stated whether the SON were of the same Substance with the FATHER, or of a like substance; whether He was one Person or two; of two Natures, or one only. To express these and other doctrines in words is dogma. To give these and other definitions, to lay down the dogma, which asserted the truth, was the work of the six great Œcumenical Councils. The latitudinarian Protestant now comes forward and says: "These are merely human definitions, which are not found in the Bible; nay, are so far from being the teaching of the Bible, that the Church had to invent words to express the doctrine. This proves that such dogmas are unnecessary. But even supposing them to be true, supposing that the Church were right in thus defining the Persons of the Holy TRINITY, it is unnecessary for people to confess them now in the public worship of the Church. Let them repose amid the other decrees and canons of these Councils, in the undisturbed folios of the student's library. We all profess our belief in the TRINITY and the Incarnation, why worry us with such technicalities? They break in on the harmony of our worship, and only suggest doubts, instead of settling our faith. Besides, what more is required but an expression of belief in the TRINITY such as is afforded in the Apostles' Creed?" All this is plausible and attractive, 'for it has the appearance of charity toward weaker brethren; espe-

cially when there is added the inevitable protest against the "warning clauses" of the Athanasian Creed, and the oft-repeated assertion, that were these dogmas removed from our public worship, a large number of those who now stand aloof would gladly come to Church, and join in her services. This point then must be examined.

If faith begin and end in itself, if it be the whole superstructure as well as foundation, as many appear to think it is, even then, surely, there is need that men confess it aright. But it is far more than this, and therefore there is a far greater need, not only for extreme accuracy, but for distinct expression in each congregation. The object of confessing our Faith in the public service is that we may worship GOD rightly: "The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship One GOD in TRINITY, and TRINITY in UNITY." It is this that Protestants, especially Latitudinarian Protestants, overlook; and naturally so, for few Protestant communities carry out their faith into acts of worship. But see what this comes to. Suppose a man to entertain Arian opinions, and to be uncertain—at least—whether the SON be of the same Substance, or of an inferior substance, with the FATHER, such opinions must materially affect his worship. If he think CHRIST to be of a different substance from the FATHER, how is he to worship Him? He can only do so under the idea that He is a second God! a second God, inferior to the FATHER. It was this that S. Athanasius saw so distinctly. It was to clear the Church from this idolatry—for it is nothing short of idolatry—that he spent his life in one long contest, in suffering, and in exile. Take the Macedonian, who denies the Personality of the HOLY GHOST; he cannot worship Him as he worships the FATHER and the SON. Take the Nestorian, who, by denying that Mary is the Mother of GOD, and allowing that she is the Mother of CHRIST only, makes the Incarnate SON to be two persons, a Divine and a Human, and

not one only. In all these cases, it is impossible that the worship of such heretics can be right. These cases assume a more fearful aspect when we come to inquire if these heretics worship the ONE TRUE GOD at all? whether they be not worshipping another God, that is, a being of their own imagination, who has objectively no more existence than the Baal or Zeus of the ancient heathen world.

The Catholic Church has laid down dogmatically the doctrines of the Holy TRINITY and the Incarnation, and has declared that in order to be saved each worshipper "must thus think of the TRINITY;" and, "furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he believe rightly the Incarnation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST;" and the creed ends with the so-called anathema, "This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." Why? Because if he refuse to do so, he is believing in, and consequently worshipping, another God: or, to put the matter in its truest form, he is not believing in, nor worshipping the TRUE GOD at all; he is believing in, and worshipping a being devised out of his own self-consciousness. Such a being the Prophets of the Old Testament emphatically pronounce to be a "vanity," a nothingness.

If a Socinian, or an Arian, reply to this fearful charge, We do worship the same GOD as you do, for we worship the FATHER; we only differ about the relationship of the SON and the HOLY GHOST: we reply, This constitutes the essence of the matter, the denial of the *Homoïsius* of the SON and the HOLY GHOST with the FATHER involves in itself a denial of the GOD Who has revealed Himself in Three co-equal and co-eternal Persons, and commanded Himself to be worshipped as such. The words of the beloved disciple are perfectly clear on this point: "Whosoever denieth the SON, the same hath not the FATHER" (1 S. John ii. 23). And again, "Whosoever . . . abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST hath not

GOD" (2 S. John 9). Thus the Mohammedan is an idolator in spite of his abhorrence of idols; for he worships a being, which is only a conception of Mohammed, and has no objective existence. If any one say that Allah is identical with the FATHER, Whom the Catholics worship, we deny the assertion; for Mohammed distinctly denies in the Koran that Allah can beget, or that any can be begotten of him; consequently he is a totally different being from the FATHER Whom the Church acknowledges. It was to preserve the faithful from such errors, from the possibility of falling into what is truly idolatrous worship, that she not only drew up the creeds for the preservation of the true Faith, but she ordered these creeds to be recited in the public worship; so anxious was she to guard her children against the possibility of falling into idolatry, that she added those clauses, commonly called damnatory, or rather incorporated them in her Confession of Faith. The above arguments, carefully considered, will prove to all candid minds the necessity for dogma, and very definite dogma; and further, that this dogma be not laid up in a napkin, or stored away out of sight in the treasury of the Church, but that it be duly used, and emphatically taught to all the faithful. With regard to the plea of want of charity in using the so-called damnatory clauses, we shall reply, that if true charity consist in letting people go on in error, perhaps in idolatry, without telling them the consequences, and the inevitable result of such persistence, then we are content to be thought uncharitable. But we have learnt that it is a far truer charity to warn and to save; for to convert a sinner from the error of his ways is that true charity which covereth a multitude of sins.

The argument, so often used by Protestants for excluding dogma, that our religion would be more popular, and our services better attended, requires but a brief reply. If the object of religion be to please the people, or if the object of public

worship be to collect large congregations, such arguments are irresistible. But when we recall to mind that the object of religion is to make men religious, faithful servants of a jealous GOD, we cannot think that faithlessness to GOD is the best way of promoting that object. Neither do we suppose that GOD is better pleased to see His temples crowded with multitudes who refuse to obey His laws, and honour Him as they are commanded to do, than with a smaller band of faithful and devout worshippers.

The general objection that Protestants make to many, at least, of the dogmas of the Church is, that they are not found in the Bible ; and they lay down a law that all truth and all doctrine is contained in it—that the latter, in a word, is the one sole Rule of Faith. The Catholic, on the other hand, is ready to admit the authority of all laid down in the Bible, yet holds that the creeds and the decrees of Œcumenical Councils form the Rule of Faith. This is a matter which requires closer investigation : for there is something misleading to the popular mind in the term “ Holy Scriptures ” or “ the Bible.” In the popular sense, the Bible forms one book, the only one having any divine authority. It is inspired, infallible, the one Revelation from GOD to man ; the one communication from heaven to earth. As such it not only stands by itself, but is complete, and is the common property of the whole world ; and, in the estimation of the Bible Society, the great missionary to the heathen. Let us examine this, confining ourselves at present to the New Testament. In it are contained four histories of the life and teaching of our LORD when on earth ; a brief account of the founding of the Church ; letters from several of the Apostles ; and a prophecy of the end of the world. Of all these books, only one—the last—is stated to be written by the command of GOD. The others are the voluntary acts of individual men, or written replies to questions submitted to them. Not one of them lays any

claim to be a direct product of the Inspiring SPIRIT; not one of them professes to be a direct message from GOD to man, except the last. S. Luke gives his reason for writing the Gospel which bears his name, and the Acts of the Apostles: and so do S. Peter and S. Jude, namely, some local cause, similar to what often induces a bishop or parish priest to write a pastoral letter to his flock. These letters do not propound any theological system, do not contain any "body of divinity"; but are more concerned to enforce moral conduct, correct errors, and explain the mutual relations of the faithful towards each other, and toward GOD. They were written to explain a rule of life, not a rule of faith; a law of righteousness, not a system of doctrinal divinity; their purpose is instruction in holiness, more than in dogmatic theology. In a word, something wholly different from that which guided Moses in writing the Pentateuch, or Isaiah and other prophets in writing their prophecies. The latter received a command, "Go write it in a book": S. John alone—the matter ought to be specially noted—S. John alone received a like commission to write, not his portion of the Gospel nor his Epistles, but the Apocalypse; and that book is not a book of laws, nor of morals, nor of faith, but a very difficult prophecy. The blessing on those who keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book, and the anathema on those who add to or take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, are not to be applied, as many do, to the whole of the Bible or to the whole of the New Testament, but only to that single book, the Apocalypse.

There was, then, no command given by our LORD to His Apostles to write books, and no intimation given that the books which they wrote contained a complete code of faith or discipline. It was apparently their own judgment alone that guided them in the work. (See 2 S. Pet. iii. 1; S. Jude 3.) Does any one suppose that S. Paul had a special revelation

to write as he did to Philemon, or that the contents of that letter are the direct dictates of the HOLY GHOST? Surely, had it been the intention of the Founder of the Church to give a book of laws for the future guidance of the Christian commonwealth, He would have done as He did when He appointed Israel to be His peculiar people. He would have empowered some one of His Apostles, or all of them together, to draw up a written code, as He commissioned Moses to compose the Pentateuch. But He did not do so. He gave no order, no directions, as far as we know, to write out a code of the laws of the New Testament, or any complete system of religion or worship. Neither did any of the Apostles attempt to carry out such an idea. Nay, one of the most eminent of them, S. Paul, especially contrasts the mode of operation in the two dispensations: one, which he calls "the ministration of death," was a written code; the other, which he terms "the ministration of the Spirit," was to be found in the persons of living men, endowed with special gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT. We shall understand this best if we contrast the two systems, as presented to our eyes at the present day. In doing so, we shall take two societies as types of the Protestant and the Catholic—the Bible Society and the Church.

If there be a society which embodies in itself more than any other the spirit of modern Protestantism it is the Bible Society, both as regards its object and its constitution. Taking the Bible as the one, sole revelation of GOD to man, deliberately ignoring the Catholic Church as the one kingdom of CHRIST upon earth, her ministry as that which alone possesses a divine commission to teach, her councils as appointed by her Head to be the one authority to declare the faith and to decide finally all controversies, the decrees of those councils and the creeds as the one Rule of Faith, the Bible Society sets forth the Bible as supplying the place of all these, and, we may add, a great deal more. It substitutes the dead

letter of a printed book for the living voice of the commissioned messengers of CHRIST. CHRIST said, "Go ye, teach all nations"—to men appointed by Him ; He never said, "Go thou"—to a book. And when the Bible Society employs a living agency, that living agency is not composed of those whom CHRIST appoints, but whom it, the Society, chooses. Yet, strange to say, its object is to distribute that Book which contains those words of our LORD which contradict its practice. Then, as to its constitution: without a creed, without any definite belief, any acknowledgment that its members hold the faith of CHRIST, with only the negative profession of Protestantism, the Society is an agglomeration of believers and unbelievers ; men of every faith, and men of no faith ; embracing in its outstretched arms every sort of heretic—even those who deny the LORD Who bought them, and reject the Sacraments of salvation. It is difficult to realise the condition of the Protestant mind which can thus break down all the barriers between truth and falsehood, belief and misbelief, in order to combine for any professedly religious object. Yet in that Book, which it is the object of this Society to disseminate, are contained the strongest assertions of the necessity for unity of faith and of the communion of the faithful ; nay more, of the hatefulness of heresy in the eye of GOD, and of His prohibition of the faithful to join with the faithless in religious fellowship.

Again, what a contradiction to its profession that the Bible is the sole Rule of Faith, is the constitution of the Society itself ! For if Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Anabaptists and Pædobaptists, Trinitarians and Socinians, Methodists and Quakers, all alike find authority for their peculiar tenets in the Bible, what Rule of Faith can it contain ? What articles of faith can it teach ? What creed can it be said to enunciate ? What diverse, what contradictory utterances of the SPIRIT, supposed to dwell in its pages, must flow from its printed letters !

This cannot be the city of GOD ; nay, rather, it is the very Babel of confusion ! And such will men always make the Bible, when they pervert its purpose. The Apostles themselves were "a savor of death unto death," as well as of "life unto life ;" in the great Sacrament it is possible to eat and drink condemnation to ourselves, as well as salvation. So may all GOD'S gifts be turned to evil, when not used aright ; the Bible as well as others. And that holy Book is misused, when it is made to establish some heresy, and to promote strife and division. Was it the purpose of GOD to make the Bible the battle-field for contending sects ? Did He intend that men should quarrel and fight over its words, nay, proceed to war, bloodshed, slaughter, to support their interpretation of its teaching ? Yet this have Protestants done in the place of maintaining the truth. Each sect takes the Bible, and proclaims it to be the rule of faith ; then it picks out passages to support its teaching. And these various teachings are as much at variance with each other, as they are at issue with the Catholic Church. Yet they all profess to be drawn from the Bible. The Bible is quoted to sanction each and all ; and as they—most of them, at least—believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of GOD, do they not thus profanely make GOD the Author of error ? If so, are we not justified in saying that they use the Bible for a purpose for which GOD never intended it ? We purposely call this a profane use of the Bible. For when men take what they believe to be the Word of GOD, and use the passages it contains for purposes of strife and discord, for the maintaining of their own opinions against the opinions of others, in a word, use the Bible as an arsenal, from whence to draw out weapons to fight their own battle, we say this is to use it profanely. That sacred book, written by inspired men, committed to the Church, intended to be the guide, the companion of the faithful, teaching him the law of righteousness, the mind of

GOD, instructing his conscience, informing his understanding, telling him how to please GOD, and to do His will, is turned into the very apple of discord, when flung among such a discordant throng of undisciplined souls. These have perverted its use, and corrupted its teaching, and have turned it from being the guide of conscience to be a Rule of Faith, and have made it the teacher of heresy, the mouth-piece of falsehood, fathering upon it all the perversions of the true Faith, and the wild imaginings of sinful men. Where is it taught that there is "One LORD, one Faith, one Baptism?" In the Bible, but not by the Bible Society. Where is the great prayer of the Founder of the Church, "that all may be one?" In the Bible, but not in the Bible Society!

And here we may point out that Protestantism is essentially the religion of a book. The Bible, under the interpretation of each sect, is everything in religion to the Protestant, as the "law" is to the Jew. There is a singular resemblance between the Jew whom S. Paul had to encounter, and the Protestant of the present day. Both take their stand on the Book, as the one sole authority for all their religion. S. Paul met the Jew in his day by insisting on the Spirit against the letter: the latter he calls the "ministration of condemnation," nay, he uses a still stronger term, "the ministration of death;" the former the "ministration of righteousness." With this he contrasts the Church as ministered by living men. "GOD," he says (2 Cor. iii. 6) "hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;" and again, "ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of CHRIST, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the SPIRIT of the Living GOD."¹

¹ We cannot forbear to quote the words of a poet of the last century :

"Who then can place in any written code
The HOLY GHOST's, the Comforter's, abode?"

as the fitness of this state of things is manifest, when we consider that the Church was under persecution of greater or lesser magnitude for three hundred years. She could not properly develop her worship until she had perfect freedom, and could manifest herself in the sight of the world. So likewise, though for an opposite reason, she could not develop her faith, until that faith was tried by heresies. S. Paul intimates this when he says, "there must be heresies among you, that they which were approved may be made manifest among you." Heresy is at once the trial of the faith of the Church, and the means by which her faith is developed and made known. It is the fire that draws out the fine silver, and separates it from the dross and baser metals. Until, then, the Church entered into this new phase of existence, that of freedom, when she could develop her worship and assemble her councils, she could not fully complete the work, given her by her LORD to do. To look upon the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists as the one, sole Rule of Faith, as a complete guide to worship, is to bind her down to an insufficient and undeveloped state of existence, the very opposite to that intended by our LORD. For He did not say to a book: "Go convert all nations," "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven." He never bestowed His SPIRIT to be fettered under the letters of a book, even though that book be the Bible. His commission was to living men: "Go *ye* into all the world," "Whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven." And to show that this power of binding and loosing did not expire with those to whom the words were addressed, He added, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This principle, that the rule of faith and worship is not to be found in the Bible but in the Church, brings out two very important results. First, that the faith of the Church is *independent* of the Bible. Secondly, that her faith is to be

learned from her worship. The Church was without any authorised creed for three hundred years, that is, until the Council of Nicæa drew up, and the Council of Constantinople completed fifty-six years afterwards, the symbol known as the Nicene Creed. There were, it is true, short creeds, composed by various persons, chiefly used by catechumens at their baptism ; but none were complete, and none were authorised by the Church. How then, it may be asked, was the Faith preserved? We answer at once, In the liturgies ; in the Anaphora were recited more or less fully, those articles of faith concerning the Three Persons of the Holy TRINITY and the Incarnation, which are now embodied in the creeds. The Church knew then, perhaps better than is known now, the fulness of the clause in the Creed of S. Athanasius : "The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship One GOD in TRINITY, and TRINITY in UNITY." When the dispute about the *Homoïsius* came before the Nicene Fathers they did not appeal to the Bible, but to Tradition for the truth of what they held ; and that Tradition was well known to all worshippers, for they heard it recited continually in the one service of the Church, the office of the Holy Eucharist. The Nicene Creed was little more than a formulating the language of the liturgies into a confession of faith, adding the new term *Homoïsius*, as marking the decision of the Council on the point of dispute. So completely was the faith of the Church contained in her liturgies, and in her forms of administering the other Sacraments, that we may truly affirm, if at any period of her life the Bible had perished, that the loss of it would not have endangered, or even affected, her faith. On the other hand, the loss of the Bible would be, to the Protestant, the loss of his whole religion. (See "The Eclipse of Faith," where this loss is imagined, and the results described.)

As an illustration of the above we might quote largely

from the ancient Liturgies. We shall content ourselves with quoting one, that called the Liturgy of S. Clement. We have selected this one, because it seems to have been drawn up as a sort of pattern liturgy, and because we have every certainty that it is ante-Nicene. After a long recitation by the Bishop, of GOD'S acts of creation and providence, of the Fall, and of sacrifice, he comes to the Incarnation : " He was incarnate of a Virgin, GOD the WORD, the Beloved SON, the First-born of every creature ; and as He Himself had foretold by the mouth of the prophets, of the seed of David, and of Abraham, and of the tribe of Juda. He, Who forms all that are born in the world, was Himself formed in the womb of a Virgin ; He That was without flesh became Flesh ; He Who was begotten in eternity was born in time ; &c." Afterwards, " He was by Thy permission delivered to Pilate the Governor ; the Judge of all the world was judged, and the Saviour of mankind condemned ; though impassible He was nailed to the Cross, although immortal died. The Giver of life was laid in the grave, that He might deliver those from the pains of death, for whose sake He came ; and that He might break the bands of the devil, and rescue man from his deceit. He arose from the dead the third day ; and after continuing forty days with His disciples, He was taken up into Heaven, and is set down on the right hand of Thee, His GOD and FATHER." There is more ; but we need not quote it. From what we have quoted it is easy to see how the liturgies preserved the Catholic Faith, even before there was any regular creed. We see how tradition supplied its place ; and we know now from what source the Catholics maintained the truth against Arians, Macedonians, Nestorians, and other heretics. The liturgies in common use not only gave a form of worship, but also were the instruments which kept the faithful fully acquainted with the true faith. In the words *and action* of the Liturgy we see carried out that great truth,

"The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship One GOD in TRINITY, and TRINITY in UNITY."

This fact, that the faith and worship of the Church are independent of the Bible, and would be sufficient for the salvation of the faithful, were it lost, suggests to us another consideration of great importance at the present day ; the relation between Faith and Science as regards the Bible, especially the Old Testament. In the estimation of many Protestants the Bible is so entirely inspired that mistakes are precluded, even in matters relating to history, physiology, and science ; and they suppose that, if in any point Science seems to be in antagonism with the written word of the Bible, it is a proof that such scientific discoveries are mistaken conclusions. Nay, there are some who have gone further, and plainly assert that every word and letter of the Bible was written under the direct guidance of the HOLY GHOST. The fatal effects of this theory are too manifest to need a lengthened exposure. An imperfect or corrupted text, a vicious translation, various readings, would all obscure, if they did not distort, the utterances of the HOLY GHOST. It is awful to contemplate the idea that the truth of GOD would in many places rest absolutely on the fidelity of an unauthorised scribe, and hang on the accuracy of a mere transcriber ! To make this fearful contingency more apparent, we must bear in mind that the dialect of the greater part of the Old Testament became obsolete at the Captivity ; that the Hebrew became a dead language to such an extent, that the Greek version, the Septuagint, took its place so completely, that all the Old Testament quotations in the New are taken from that version, even when they differ considerably from the Hebrew. Still more, that we are indebted to certain learned Hebrew grammarians, called Masorites, for the accuracy or inaccuracy of our present Hebrew text ; for these Masorites, who inserted the vowel points, certainly lived after

the time of S. Jerome, for he says plainly that there were no vowels in the Hebrew of his day. Again, let any one compare the three ancient versions, the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Latin, and he will see not only how much they differ from each other, but that he must arrive at the conclusion that the Greek translators had before them a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures, differing in many important points from that which S. Jerome used for his translation of the Vulgate. If then the faith of the Church rested wholly on the Bible, what a state of confusion we should be in! And so it is. Whence has come a large portion of the rationalism of German Biblical critics, and writers on theological subjects, but from the fact that it was a principle of the Protestant system in which they were educated, that the Bible and the Bible only was the Rule of Faith, the one authentic volume, which contained all sacred truth? Still more when it was asserted that every word and every letter was inspired? Critical investigation led them to see that the whole edifice was built on a sandy foundation, and so when the wind and rain came, it fell; or, to use another metaphor, their ship, deprived of its rudder, was inevitably driven on the rocks, when the storm of unbelief arose! A belief in the Church as the "pillar and ground of the faith," the ever-living and infallible witness to the truth, would have saved many from rationalism, as it has saved thousands of Englishmen. These last have been saved, not because they formulated their belief in the authority of the Church as to matters of faith in such language as we have used here, but because they habitually used their Prayer Books, and frequented the services of the Church. The Church influenced them in a way they were not aware of.

We do not purpose to pursue this subject further. We only introduced it to illustrate our position, that the Faith of the Church is independent of the Bible: and to show that

that faith is not concerned to reconcile the modern discoveries of science with the statements found in the Bible. We may say more ; the Book of Genesis, as we have it now, may, or may not, be as Moses wrote it. It may be only a portion of what he wrote, or it may be corrupted and interpolated. Such contingencies, even if they could be proved, would not affect the Catholic Faith, nor mar the hope of salvation of a single soul. The Church, not the Bible, S. Paul informs us, is the "pillar and ground of the truth ;" and as long as that pillar stands on its own foundation we know that we have the truth. Men may fight about the letter of the Bible, men may prove Moses to be mistaken, and the history in the first chapters of Genesis to be a myth. It does not shake our foundation: it does not shatter our pillar. We rest on a **LIVING SPIRIT**, not on a dead letter: on an undying witness, not on a possibly corrupted document. "The letter killeth ; the **SPIRIT** giveth life."

The testimony of the Liturgies to the Catholic Faith brings out in a still more prominent manner the position that worship holds in the system of the Church ; and presents one of the most marked distinctions between the Catholic and the Protestant. The Protestant, by rejecting liturgies, as with us ; or by mutilating them and patching them up with incongruous matter, as is done in some foreign Protestant communities ; has well-nigh lost the very idea of worship, as he has as nearly lost his hold on the Catholic Faith. If a Catholic go into a Presbyterian or Independent meeting-house, he sees hardly anything that savours of worship ; he hears a sermon and prayers—the latter often more in the form of what he understands as "meditations," very frequently excellent in their way—but all subjective. There is no objective worship. It is all the work of a minister trying to impress on the mind of the hearer his own thoughts and feelings ; a most useful thing of itself, and largely followed by our own priests in

conducting a retreat or a mission; sometimes, especially among the Primitive Methodists, allowing large scope for the demonstration of excited feelings. One intention of this, in order to its being successful, is to produce the like amount of excited feelings in the hearers. The only approach to objective worship is to be found in the hymns, but a large proportion of these is entirely subjective, like the prayers. The whole of this is, however, subservient to the preaching. In the estimation of ninety-nine out of every hundred who attend these meetings, the principal object is the sermon. When the "LORD'S Supper" is "administered," which is only four times in the year in Scotland, though oftener among Independents and Baptists in England, it is still subjective. Indeed, among the former, the preaching that accompanies the administration is generally thought more of than the reception of the elements. The rite itself is hardly considered to be an act of worship. If it be not wholly a sort of acted sermon, it is nothing more than a possible means of grace, not through the reception of the elements, but through the state of the recipient's feelings. The whole action is little else, if anything at all else, than a special manner of reminding the believer of a long past historical fact, and as a means of producing a certain impression on his mind with respect to it. The attitude of the recipient, his sitting at a table, so much insisted on by the older Puritans, in itself precludes the idea of worship, and suggests, as it was intended to do, the communion of believers one with another, rather than communion with CHRIST. It was to exclude the idea of objective worship of CHRIST in the Sacrament, that made the early Puritans so strongly insist on sitting, and so vehemently denounce kneeling.

The explanation of this prevalence of the subjective idea, and its almost banishment of the objective, lies in the fact that Protestants, by their separation from the Catholic

Church, have lost the idea, as well as the reality, of the Communion of Saints; and have had to take up entirely with the notion of each believer being a disconnected atom, wrapped up in his own individuality—he is justified in his own individual faith, and saved by individual grace. The Catholic idea of sacramental incorporation into the visible Church, and sacramental life in it, he cannot comprehend. Indeed, the only idea he has of religion is that of getting good for himself. He goes to that church or that chapel where he gets most good; this “good” being really estimated by the effect produced on his own feelings by the voice of the preacher. The Evangelical movement fostered this notion of religion in the Church of England, until it became a dominant principle in the minds of the leaders of that movement. It is that each individual was brought into a state of salvation, not through incorporation with the body of CHRIST, but through a single act of his own, his individual faith. To such an extent was this notion carried, that the very idea of the Catholic Church, or the Sacraments of CHRIST, being at all concerned in the matter, or having anything to do with bringing him into communion with CHRIST, was strongly repudiated, nay, was denounced as interposing something between the believer and CHRIST, or as putting something between the sinner and his Saviour.¹

¹ Lest we should be thought to be giving an exaggerated view of this position taken by Evangelical divines thirty years ago, we may refer our readers to a “Charge” of Dr. Sumner, then Bishop of Chester, in 1841. This Charge is remarkable for the deliberate statement of the writer’s opinion, that the Catholic movement was the work of Satan (p. 20 et seq.). The Charge is chiefly taken up with asserting the individuality of the believer against the idea of his being an incorporated member of CHRIST’s Church. The following passage is from the Appendix (p. 82): “The texts which I have quoted are among multitudes of plain declarations, in which GOD proposes to establish relations with us on the footing of faith, individual faith, in His SON JESUS CHRIST. If His purpose were changed, and He designed to set up a visible institution, like the Christian Church, as the medium of man’s communication with Him, He surely would have

It was the antagonism to this favourite idea, that caused such an alarm in the minds of the Evangelicals, when the "Oxford Tracts" appeared. They had so completely adopted Luther's *dictum* about justification by faith as the mark of a standing or a falling Church, as well as his doctrine of justification itself, that they were terrified when they heard anything about the Church or the Sacraments. By far the greater part of the palpable misrepresentations of the Tracts and their writers by this party, was due, not so much from an intention to misrepresent, as from an incapacity to understand how individual faith was compatible with incorporation into the Catholic Church, and with objective grace in the Sacraments. This difficulty has happily been surmounted; the labour of the Catholic School since Bishop Sumner published his Charge has been successful in reconciling these two—supposed—antagonistic positions. We may now safely affirm that no priest of the Church of England, except perhaps a few extreme Calvinists, would subscribe the opinions of the Bishop of Chester thirty-two years ago. We must go among Nonconformists to hear this view of personal redemption taught as the true one.

The consideration of this point leads us to see what is the real fundamental difference between the faith of the Catholic and that of the Protestant, the one article which separates them so markedly from each other. It is the belief in the existence of the one, visible Church. On this depends not only the whole Sacramental system, but the very essence of man's relationship with CHRIST. This was the question both with Luther and Calvin, and of course other Protestants. They had separated from the visible Church, from the communion of that body of which CHRIST is the Head: how then did they and their followers stand? how were they to reveal this to us in clear and intelligible terms. Scripture contains nothing of the kind." For a recent instance, see the Bishop (Baring) of Durham's last "Charge."

have communion with their LORD? Luther put forth his theory of personal faith, Calvin his of personal election. Both faith in Luther's system, and predestination in Calvin's, are the immediate act of GOD, wholly irrespective of man's will or co-operation. In effect they are the same thing under different names. However contrary to all experience this theory of man's passiveness is, it is rendered necessary from their both holding a previous doctrine about original sin. They alike held that original sin was an entire deprivation of all inherent goodness, a total loss of the image of GOD, a state of utter reprobation, in which free-will towards righteousness was impossible, because non-existent. Luther states this in its fullest form in his treatise on Free Will. One passage from that book will suffice: "This, therefore, in the first place it is necessary and salutary for every Christian to be fully acquainted with, that GOD foreknows nothing as contingent on man's will, but that He foresees, proposes, and does all things by His incommutable, and eternal, and infallible will. With this thunderbolt free will is altogether thrown down and crushed to pieces." ("Works," vol. iii. 170.) Accordingly faith, by which any one is justified, is not only a gift of GOD, but is forced upon a passive soul, with no power to consent or refuse to receive it. We need not quote anything from Calvin's works, his opinions are too well known to need it. What we want to make clear is, that these two great heresiarchs agreed in insisting upon salvation being an act of GOD towards individuals of His own mere will, without any co-operation, or even consent in the individual himself. In such a system as this it is plain that the idea of a visible Church could have no place. It is not only unnecessary, but is a contradiction, because the doctrine of the Catholic Church is, that grace is given to every member at his initiation into the body by baptism, to co-operate with his own will in working out his salvation; and that, consequently, he is

responsible for his use or misuse of that gift. Luther, we know, held that no sin will condemn any one who holds his faith; not only did he say, in his celebrated letter from Wartburg: "Be a sinner, and sin lustily, but still more lustily believe and rejoice in CHRIST, who is the conqueror of sin, of death, and of the world;" but he said also, "Now thou seest how rich is the Christian, for he cannot, though he wish it, lose his salvation, however great his sin may be, unless he refuse to believe. No sins can bring damnation upon him, save unbelief alone." ("De Capt. Bab." vol. ii. p. 264.) How the last sentence is compatible with the loss of free will, it is impossible to say; but then, when was consistency ever found in any one who departed from the Catholic Faith? or, rather, how is it possible that any religious system, which contradicts the Catholic Faith, can be consistent with itself?

Protestants have considerably modified these extreme opinions of Luther, just as they have modified Calvin's on predestination and reprobation; but they retain still, in their modified form, a strong hold on the intellect of a very large class of persons, even among the clergy of the Church of England. It was the prevalence of belief in the Protestant principle of individual faith, without reference to the Catholic Church, that caused the Evangelical party to oppose the Catholic doctrine of Baptism, and raised such a sympathy with the late Mr. Gorham. For he was supported by that party, not because they held his peculiar opinion—perhaps not one in a hundred did—but because he was a champion for the individual idea against the Church idea, which at that time was thought so incompatible. So great a change has now come over the Church, that we may safely predicate that were such another trial to take place in our day, the clergy of the Evangelical party would, with a few extreme exceptions, give their support on the side of the Catholic doctrine of that Sacrament. We may say more. We may fairly expect of

the well-informed members of that once powerful body, that they have come to see what the Visible Church really is, and her relation to CHRIST and to the members of her body, and to see that corporate life does not extinguish individual life ; and that it is possible that she by her Sacraments and worship may be the channel of communion and grace between the members and their Head ; and that that communion does not depend on a mere sentimental impression, of individual Christians, that they are in a state of salvation, which they call assurance of faith ; or that salvation, or even religion itself, is an entirely subjective matter.

The idea of the Catholic Church and her Sacraments being something interposed between the believer and his Saviour, which pervaded the mind of Dr. Sumner when he wrote his Charge, as well as of those who thought with him, could never have arisen had not there been an entire misunderstanding as to what the Church is. And, perhaps, one of the most powerful causes of that misapprehension lay in the constant use of the term "Established Church : " the idea uppermost in the mind when using this phrase is, that the Church of England is a mere sect created by the State, and united to it for her exclusive benefit ; a sect having no divine authority at all, standing on no higher footing than the established Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland, or the established Protestant bodies in northern Europe. This is the idea of the Church in the minds of most of the Nonconformists. Hence their bitter hostility to her as a more favoured sect than that to which they belong. The prevalence of this view of the Church is, no doubt, due chiefly to the Revolution of 1688, for unfortunately the Caroline divines had injudiciously mixed up together their doctrine of the divine right of Kings with the divine authority of the Church. When the one had to give way, the other naturally became obscured. Accordingly it became the fashion of divines in the eighteenth century to

style the Church, not the Church of CHRIST, or the Catholic Church, but the "Established Church;" leaving the title Catholic to that portion of the Church which owns the authority of the Pope. In addition to this, to make still more obscure the real position and claims of the Church in England, they commonly applied to her also the term "Protestant," and in their writings seemed to identify her with the Lutheran and Calvinistic communities abroad. In fact the popular notion of the Church in the eighteenth century was thoroughly Erastian. The Evangelical movement was a reaction against this secular notion of religion. But instead of teaching the spiritual nature, as well as the divine authority of the Church, the leaders of that movement fell back into an error equally great, of ignoring the Church altogether, and looking only at the individual. So completely had the idea of the Church died out, that the Evangelicals did not know what Catholics meant, when they taught the necessity of Church communion. They thought that it was some agency external to themselves brought to enslave their individuality. They talked of the Church being interposed between the individual Christian and CHRIST. In like manner they regarded the Sacraments: they looked upon them with suspicion, as if they were some species of idolatry, against which they were bound to protest. This view of the Church and the Sacraments proceeded from their ignoring the objective side of religion, and looking only at the subjective; the sole test of any one being in a state of salvation was, not his being admitted into the body of CHRIST, his having been made a child of GOD, through the grace of the Sacraments, but on the state of his feelings. "The LORD'S Supper," as they always termed the Holy Eucharist, was only a means of grace, not the great act of worship of the Church: it benefited those only who believed in the scheme of salvation propounded by Protestants.

The consideration of this point involves the important distinction between objective and subjective religion ; it forms the difference between Catholic and Protestant. The Catholic holds religion to be both objective and subjective ; the Protestant holds to the latter, ignoring the former. We shall best explain this matter by examining the great act of worship in the Church, the Holy Eucharist. For at least five hundred years of the Church's life, this was the only act of public worship prescribed by her. The only forms of worship drawn up by her were the liturgies ; and these liturgies were constantly celebrated. The terms used in the liturgical forms express with sufficient clearness the primitive and Apostolic idea of what that act of worship is. When we read of the celebrant applying the terms "tremendous and unbloody sacrifice," "a sweet smelling sacrifice ;" when the elements themselves are styled "precious, heavenly, ineffable, spotless, glorious, fearful, terrible, divine," (as in the Liturgy of S. James), and again "holy, spotless, immortal, heavenly mysteries" (as in that of S. Mark) ; and when the altar on which they are offered is styled "holy, heavenly, reasonable," (S. Mark) ; we cannot but see that the Christians of the first and second centuries must have had something more than a mere subjective religion : the Holy Eucharist must have been something more than a mere memorial of a past fact, or even a mere means of grace to a believer in Protestant doctrine. To render our meaning on this important point perfectly clear, we must state definitely what the Church is.

We have before stated that the crucial point of difference between the Catholic and the Protestant is his belief or denial of the existence of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, as a visible and organised body on earth. This difference is not one about an abstract article of faith, but is one which includes or excludes a fact, and still more a fact on which hang some very important matters connected with

eternal salvation. For on it depends all that is connected with the Sacraments and worship as objective realities. If the Church have an objective existence, as the Catholic believes, if she have a divinely appointed ministry, then to her belongs the authority to settle what the faithful are to believe ; the whole question as to what is true or false with regard to GOD and eternal life ; what is the Catholic Faith, and what is heresy ; as well as the regulation and order of the worship of GOD, and the dispensation of the means of grace. To her ministry, and to it alone, is committed by her Head those powers and rights which make her worship acceptable to GOD and her sacraments means of grace to the faithful. The Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, lays down the law as one common to the two divinely-ordained ministries of the Israelite community and of the Catholic Church : " No man taketh this honour (of the priesthood) unto himself, but he that is called of GOD as was Aaron ; " and he adds, speaking of the priesthood of CHRIST, so " CHRIST glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest, but He That said unto Him, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." And that this priesthood is to be continued throughout the whole Church, both in heaven and earth, CHRIST in heaven, and His Apostles and their successors on earth, we learn from CHRIST Himself, Who said, " As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you." And, again, as if to show more clearly that this priesthood is to continue as long as this world continues : " Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Such a priesthood requires not only a divine commission, but divine power. Therefore, on the day of His Resurrection, CHRIST bestowed this power, " He breathed on them and said, ' Receive ye the HOLY GHOST,' " coupling this gift with a supernatural power to extend to the inner and spiritual life of the faithful the remission of sins ; having previously assured them that what *they bound* or *loosed* on earth should be bound or loosed in

heaven. And this order of things, the visible Church with a divinely-appointed ministry, is a fact closely connected with the Incarnation, and dependent upon it. For as the invisible GOD became visible by the Incarnation, and in that Incarnate state wrought out the redemption of man, so it is not only consistent with that order, but absolutely necessary to its continuance, as the means of conveying the benefits of that redemption to unborn multitudes, that the redeemed should belong to a visible community with visible and tangible instruments, Priests and Sacraments. Indeed, we may affirm it as a necessary truth, that the visible Incarnation of the SON of GOD implies a visible Church and a visible order of ministry. S. Paul, on one occasion, identifies the visible Church with CHRIST Himself, the body with the Head, "as the body is one, and hath many members, . . . so also is CHRIST;"—meaning, of course, the Body of CHRIST, which is the Church—"for by one spirit are we all baptised into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 12). As the Hebrew community, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was a shadow of what was to come, so the Body of CHRIST with its Priesthood and Sacraments, is the reality, of which the former was the type. Both must necessarily be visible, with a visible sacrifice and a visible priesthood.

The Protestant notion of an invisible Church, a body of the elect known to GOD, but unknown to men, seems to contradict the idea of the Incarnation, as that by which redemption is accorded to a fallen world; for with the rejection of the visible Church as an objective body, there necessarily follows a rejection of everything objective in the religion of that body, leaving only the subjective element. In such a state of things it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to perceive the consistency of using sacramental ordinances with visible elements. They can be, at best, only signs of something absent, not means of present grace; incapable of benefiting

any one in and by themselves ; acting, as far as they can act, like pictures or sermons, on the imagination of those who receive them. In the Lutheran system, the highest point to which they could rise was the one-sided view, considered as pledges of the truth of the divine promises for the forgiveness of sins. The Sacraments, accordingly, were to have no other destination than to make the faithful receiver assured that his debt of sins was remitted ; and to console and to quiet him. (Moehler, "Symbolik," c. iv. s. 39.) How the baptism of infants can be consistently retained under such systems as those of Luther and Calvin, it is impossible to understand ; we can only remark that it is one of those instances in which Protestant practice contradicts Protestant theory. Indeed, as Moehler observes, Sacraments, in the Catholic sense, cannot have any place in the Protestant systems. They belong to the Church as an objective reality, and are themselves of that nature ; consequently they have nothing in common with a purely subjective religion, or a mere intellectual system. If it be asserted that Protestants regard the Sacraments from a different point of view from Catholics, and, therefore, in their estimation, they are both useful and necessary ; we reply, that then they cease to be Sacraments. If, for example, Infant Baptism be a mere external dedication of an unconscious being to the service of GOD, unaccompanied with any inward grace ; or if it be merely the initiation of the same unconscious being into a separate sect, a community distinct from the Catholic Church, it ceases to be a Sacrament, and becomes a mere ceremony, such as the admission of any one into the order of Freemasons, or even into any trade union. If men and women meet together to eat and drink Bread and Wine in remembrance of our LORD'S doing so, or out of religious friendship towards one another, such an act is something quite distinct from the Holy Eucharist of the Church, and ceases to possess the essence of a Sacrament. If, again, a

person be set apart, by laying on of hands, for the ministry in any particular sect, and not as a priest of the Catholic Church, there is no Sacrament of Holy Order, nothing more than the appointment of a fit man to hold office in a mutual benefit society. In the latter case, all sects of Protestants deny any gift of Divine power in the laying on of hands; some regard it as nothing more than an assurance to the people that such a person is fit to be a teacher, a sort of certificate of competency. (See the "Charge of ex-President Wiseman to the Wesleyan Conference, Aug. 6, 1873.")

In fact, we may say, generally, that in most Protestant bodies in English-speaking countries, and with many individual churchmen, the Bible has taken the place of all the Sacraments put together. They have abstracted, in idea, from those divinely appointed ordinances, the grace which properly belongs to them, and transferred it to the printed letters of the English version of the Scriptures; so that they really expect to receive from hearing read, or the act of reading, the letter of the Book those particular spiritual gifts and graces, which the Head of the Church attached to the Sacraments, when properly used. A Bishop of Gloucester in the last century could actually say in one of his sermons: "For though, according to the promise, His [i.e. the HOLY GHOST'S] ordinary influence occasionally assists the faithful in all ages; yet His constant abode and supreme illumination is in the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament." People—not the least educated—will sit down to "read the Bible" on Sundays, as a substitute for divine worship in Church. Old persons will be found "reading the Bible" diligently day after day, as the preparation for the Great Judgment. If we ask them why they never communicate in the Body and Blood of their LORD? they answer, that they "read the Bible" at home. The reading of the printed letters of an English translation of the histories of our LORD'S life, or the letters of His Apostles

is, in the estimation of these persons, not only the highest and most efficacious means of grace, but so much a means that it supersedes and renders unnecessary all others.¹

In contrast with this notion, let us consider the place which is assigned to the Sacraments in the Catholic Church, and the estimation in which they are held.

The Sacraments—speaking of them generally, not intending each in particular—occupy a double function, that of means of grace, and acts of worship. Those, whose religion is chiefly subjective, hold to the former function, though probably in a limited sense, while they practically ignore the latter. In accordance with this notion, it was the universal practice in the Anglican Church, not many years ago, that both Baptisms and Eucharists should be private, i.e., confined to those who took part in them; the rest of the faithful being excluded. If Confirmations, Ordinations, Marriages, were open to the presence of others than those concerned in them, it was more to see a sight, or to gratify curiosity, than to join and take part in them, that brought a congregation together: no one thought of joining in them any further than following the service in the Prayer Book, perhaps not even that. The only part which was thought be of any concern was the sermon, if there were one. To those who acknowledged them as means of grace, there was a benefit to the recipient; to non-recipients, there might possibly be a subjective benefit from having their feelings aroused, and their

¹ It may not seem out of place to mention in a note two instances, which came under the immediate notice of the writer, when a curate in Lancashire. He found an old woman constantly reading her Bible. She told him she read it through twice a year from beginning to end. She complained bitterly of the hard words and proper names which she had to puzzle out; and, as she considered it necessary to read half aloud, deplored the effect it had in making her cough. She did not profess to understand what she read, nay, she did not try: the whole virtue lay in reading the words of the book. She was thus working out her own salvation. The other was an old man, who assured the writer that he was well prepared for Heaven, for he had a good pair of spectacles!

affections excited. The Catholic movement, by elevating the Sacraments into their proper places both as channels of grace, and as acts of worship, changed the whole practice of the Church in celebrating them, as well as the idea of the purpose of their celebration. Baptisms being administered in the presence of the whole congregation, Confirmations and Ordinations being rescued from the low estimation of being mere spectacles, they became acts of worship, in which all the faithful bore their part. The idea of the Communion of Saints is realised in them, "If one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it," as well as share in the prayers and thanksgivings peculiar to each Sacrament. Strange to say, that this privilege is strenuously denied, nay, passionately forbidden, in the case of one Sacrament, the Holy Eucharist; that which analogy would teach us to be the one of all others to which the faithful have not only the best right to be present, but at which their presence is best calculated to honour GOD, and to benefit themselves. Yet they are to be rigidly excluded: they may be present, nay, they are exhorted to be present at Baptisms and Confirmations, and told to join with the recipients of these Sacraments in the common prayer, hoping to receive a common blessing; they are exhorted to pray with and for them; but they are actually driven away; we speak from personal knowledge, out of the church, by church officers, in the middle of the Eucharistic office!

Were the persons who act thus influenced by a high and profound notion of the awfulness of the Sacrament, of the deep mysteries about to be transacted, we could perhaps see a reason for the exclusion of all save the initiated; we might have expected to hear the voice exclaiming, "*Procul, O procul este profani!*" but we find the very reverse. As a rule, those who are most forward in driving away the baptised churchman from worshipping with his fellow Christians, is the man who takes the lowest view of the Holy Eucharist, who

denies an objective Presence, who looks for grace only in the subjective mental condition of the recipient. Nay more, it is found among those who regard the whole Sacrament as an acted sermon rather than as a channel of grace. This is perhaps the strangest contradiction that we meet with. Take, for instance, any of the sermons as "expositions of the LORD'S Supper" of the Evangelical party fifty years ago, and see how they regarded, and taught their hearers to regard, this Sacrament. Simeon's "Skeleton Sermons" lie open before us, in which are two on 1 Cor. xi. 24, 26, 28. We read, "CHRIST by His death has effected a greater deliverance for us. In partaking of the Bread and Wine we show forth His death. We show forth *the manner of it* as excruciating and bloody. We show forth *the end of it* as a sacrifice for our sins. We show forth *the sufficiency of it* for our full salvation. We show forth His death till He come. CHRIST will, in due season, come to judge the world. Then His people will no longer need such memorials as these . . . but till then the remembrance of His dying love, and the expectation of His future advent, must be thus preserved. Such was CHRIST'S end in instituting, and such should be our end in observing it." Again, "That ordinance is a season of remarkable solemnity. There we see CHRIST crucified, as it were, before our eyes. There we contemplate the most stupendous mysteries. There we commemorate the greatest of all mercies." Now if these purposes, as enumerated by Simeon be "CHRIST'S end in instituting, and our end in observing" this Sacrament, viz., to show forth "the manner, the end, and the sufficiency" of our LORD'S death; in other words, if it be a sort of acted sermon, a living picture of the Crucifixion; if, as we are told, the breaking of the Bread, and the pouring out of the Wine do most vividly represent to the eye the Sacrifice on the Cross, then why, in the name of all that is just and reasonable, is *this not done publicly*, in the sight not only of the recipients,

but of all the congregation, adults and children? Why are not they permitted to see "CHRIST crucified, as it were, before [their] eyes?" Why are not all allowed to contemplate "the most stupendous mysteries?" Why should this be reserved for a few only? If the subjective notion be the true one, viz. : the effect on the mind and feelings, why is it carefully withheld from those whom it may thus benefit? If it be answered, that this subjective benefit is only possible for recipients, then we must beg leave to dispute the assertion; and further, to say that such an assertion is self-contradictory, and proves only that the whole theory is false.

Again, if the benefits of the reception of this Sacrament be such as Simeon and writers of his class ascribe to it, we should naturally suppose that among them the celebration of the Holy Eucharist would be as frequent as possible. Since they taught that the act of Redemption not only culminated in the Crucifixion, but the whole of it was, as it were, contained in it, we should have thought that the Sacrament which thus so forcibly portrayed this act before the eyes and the mind of the believer, would be brought before him as frequently as possible, in fact, as often as preaching about it in words. But it was not so; on the contrary, it was of rare occurrence; at most, with a few exceptions, once a month; with the generality—we are speaking of things fifty years ago—four times in the year. The reason for this infrequency was confessed by many to be, that if constantly repeated, it lost its effect on the mind; in other words, it ceased to benefit the believer subjectively. Another reason, we should think, to prove the incompetency of the subjective theory. Strangely enough, this argument was not admitted in the case of preaching the Atonement; familiarity with the subject in words was not supposed to produce the like effect with that of familiarity of action. The general congregation being thus deprived of Eucharistic worship, the communicants

having only very rare opportunities of joining in it, what was then given as a substitute? Matins and Evensong once a week; in some cases an occasional week-day Evensong. This was all that the faithful were urged to attend. Thus for the ordinary church-goer, the hearing of Matins and Evensong was the principal, if not the only, public duty of worship expected of him. We say *hearing*, not joining, for the performance of the service was confined to the clergymen, the clerk, and a few, often paid, singers. As a rule no one in those days ever thought of joining audibly in the service. Why the duty of hearing Matins and Evensong should be so strongly insisted upon, and the hearing of the Eucharistic Office be as strongly forbidden, passes intelligent comprehension; especially as the latter, not the former, set forth so vividly, as we have been told, the fact of the Atonement. There is doubtless another and a powerful reason to the Protestant, lurking behind all this. It is that it is a Catholic custom for non-communicants to join their fellow Christians in Eucharistic worship; and for this reason to be discouraged, and, if possible, forbidden. We are told that it leads to substituting bodily attendance for actual participation. The answer to this is not far to seek. It is a fact proved repeatedly by printed statistics, that the number of actual communicants in those churches, where Eucharistic worship is practised, far exceeds the number in such Evangelical churches where the practice is forbidden. We need only compare S. Alban's, Holborn, with S. Mary's Islington; or S. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, with S. George's, Hanover Square. The true reason lies really in a disbelief in our LORD'S actual Presence in the Sacrament; in other words, a rejection of the only possible meaning of His own words—the literal one—"This is My Body," "This is My Blood."¹

¹ It will not seem out of place to quote here from the Bishop (Wordsworth) of Lincoln's "Charge" (1873), "As to the frequency of celebration, I find from your

The explanation of all this strange contradiction of principles is probably to be found in the mistaken idea of what the Eucharist and the Eucharistic office really are, and what place they have ever held in the Catholic Church. The Catholic idea is that the Holy Eucharist is the one act of worship instituted by the Great Head of the Church for all the members; and the Eucharistic office—the Liturgy—was drawn up in Apostolic times, if not by some of the Apostles themselves, for carrying out this purpose. All subsequent additions were made to render the act of worship more complete. The Protestant notion of this Sacrament is that only of the recipient getting some personal benefit. On the one side there is the grand and magnificent idea of the oneness of the worship of the hosts of Heaven, the redeemed souls in Paradise, and the faithful on earth, all uniting in the One Great Sacrifice of our LORD'S Body and Blood in the threefold Church, triumphant, expectant, militant, in the threefold Temple of GOD, which comprises all that was seen by S. John in the great Apocalyptic Vision. On the other side, there is the small, insignificant idea of each single individual getting some personal benefit from the memory of a past event. It is hardly possible for any two ideas to be more widely distinct, if not opposite; nor is it possible for any two ideas to differ more in grandness and meanness of conception. No wonder that the whole type of religion of the Catholic and Protestant differs so strongly from each other. The like, though in a far lower

replies to my enquiries, that great difference of practice prevails. In one church in the diocese the Holy Communion was administered 460 times last year; in four it was administered more than 100 times; in 16, it was administered between 61 and 100 times; in 59, between 31 and 60 times; in 58, between 21 and 30 times; in 247, between 13 and 20 times; in 241, between 7 and 12 times; and in 201 churches, I regret to add, it was administered less than seven times." (p. 111.) Hence, out of the 826 churches in the diocese, only 80 have celebration every Sunday, while 746 parish priests decline to offer the Bread of Life to their people each Lord's Day, and so fail to fulfil the command of their Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

sense, may be said of the other Sacraments, at least of such as are public. The Baptism of an infant is not only the personal benefit bestowed on the recipient, but it may be considered as the act of the whole Church, represented by the congregation, solemnly dedicating a child born in sin to its Redeemer and its GOD. So of Confirmation and Holy Order : in each case it is an act of the Church, an act of worship, an oblation to the Head of the Church by her members, of one or more to His service.

There is one class of persons who object to Eucharistic worship without oral communion, that must be heard with respect, and their objections replied to ; we mean that class—a very small one—of learned men, who appeal to primitive custom. They say that such a practice was forbidden by the Church of the first three centuries, and that it only existed afterwards as an abuse of later and laxer times. They quote canons and regulations to show that at stated parts of the office certain persons were ordered to depart, and were not allowed to be present at the Prayer of Consecration and the oral communion of the faithful : and further, that so positive was the precept for oral communion, that if any one persisted in remaining without reception for more than three times, he incurred the penalty of excommunication. Even were this true, the conclusion drawn from these premisses, that non-communicating worship is wrong now, will not bear inspection. For, in order that we should take the customs of the primitive Church as our guide in this matter, we must enforce the whole system of primitive penitential discipline. To do this we must begin by excommunicating all the confirmed who do not communicate orally. If it be replied that such discipline is impossible now, and would defeat its own purpose ; we reply, in return, “Do not, then, talk about primitive custom ; primitive discipline was one whole, perfect system, *adapted to times of persecution ; it is not just to take one*

point of the system and insist upon that, while you reject all the rest as unsuited to the times ; let us have the whole, or none." The fact that the Church was obliged to relax this discipline, when persecution ceased, and allowed what was not allowed before, shows that she knew what she was doing, and adapted herself to the circumstances of the times. The Church of the nineteenth century must do the like.

But it is not true that, even under the strict discipline of the early Church, the faithful, who were not oral communicants, were forbidden to be present at the mysteries, for, as Bingham shows, there was a class of co-standers (*consistentes*), "so called from their having liberty to stand with the faithful at the altar, and join in the common prayers, and see the oblation offered ; but yet they might neither make their own oblations, nor partake of the Eucharist with them. This the Council of Nice [canon xi.] calls communicating with the people in prayers only, without the oblation ;" and a little further on, "In all which we may observe that the word 'communicating' does not always signify partaking of the Eucharist, but communicating in prayers only, without the oblation ; which was but an imperfect sort of communion" ("Antiquities," b. xviii. c. i. § 6). Our baptised and confirmed parishioners, who, through the neglect of former years, the infrequency of celebration, the lack of proper teaching—perhaps through wrong teaching—have yet to learn the obligation, the necessity for oral communion, are not to be debarred the privilege of communicating in prayers with the rest of the faithful. It is, as it were, a preparation for the greater privilege, and an approach to it ; but it is a privilege in itself that no priest has a right to debar any, excepting those under sentence of excommunication. The pause, which it is now proposed to be made after the Prayer for the Church Militant is, we suppose, intended to be a return to primitive discipline. Perhaps a parish priest will best comply with the new order,

if he then give notice for all persons undergoing penance, or excommunicate, or possessed with devils, to depart ; he might also add, that all who are not so should remain. We can afford to smile at these impotent attempts to sweep back the tide of Catholic feeling, or to stay the irruption of Catholic principles. Such feeble obstacles will only serve to give force to the current, and make its power the more felt.

It is important to observe that Protestant opposition is now directed chiefly against the Catholic use of the Sacraments, and Catholic worship. We hear little or nothing of those matters that used to distract the Protestant mind, the abstract doctrines of justification by faith, or election and reprobation ; and naturally so, for Catholics have left off disputing on these points, and have set themselves to manifest doctrine in worship. The opposition to the development of worship proceeds, we think, so far as concerns Protestants in the Church, far more from an incapacity to understand the spiritual nature of the Church, her Sacraments and worship, than from any other cause. It is from viewing religion from an individual and an intellectual point, instead of from a spiritual one, in connection with the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, that the difference appears. Catholics and Protestants outside the Church start from two different points, and then run in courses parallel to each other ; so that it has been said, and we think truly said, that they are not so much two phases of the same religion, as two distinct religions ; the narrowness of the Protestant view rendering it incapable of understanding the spiritual religion of the Catholic. Hence we may expect to see a continual opposition to the Church from those without her pale. ' The more the Church succeeds in establishing her spiritual character and worship, the greater will be the opposition of the world ; for such spiritual worship is entirely contrary to the world's notion of religion ; and *wherever there is great success in religion, there will be also*

a corresponding opposition. "A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries," is the experience of all from S. Paul's days to our own. Progress by antagonism is a law in the Church abundantly illustrated within the last thirty years.

Of Protestantism within the Church, the same rule holds good; the more that faithful priests have been prosecuted in the law courts, the greater the advance that has been made; the more the whole movement has been vilified and misrepresented, the more it has flourished and prevailed. "All we want now," said a writer some few years ago, "to establish our principles firmly, is a regular persecution," and the result of the Church Association's prosecutions has abundantly verified the truth of the remark. The Court of the Privy Council which lent itself as the instrument to stamp out Catholic worship, has rendered itself so contemptible by judgments flagrantly contrary to law and history, that it has been itself abolished, with hardly one sigh of regret; while its last utterance forced out a cry, from those that had invoked its aid, like that of Balak to Balaam, "I called thee to curse mine enemies, but behold, thou hast altogether blessed them." We are irresistibly reminded of a prophecy of the natural Israel, which will be found true of the spiritual: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the LORD, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD."

The crusade which is now being preached against Confession and the Sacrament of Penance will, we feel sure, do much to increase the practice, and re-establish the general use of that Sacrament; the exaggerations, the misstatements of the speakers against it, will only react on themselves. They will induce inquiry and reflection; to end, not seldom, in bringing men and women to that very duty which they heard

so vehemently denounced. Vilification is the last resource of a failing cause, and the most fatal : for those who use it lose the confidence of their followers. An advancing cause can afford to be content with truth.

We therefore do not despair of Protestants within the Church ; nay, we see every reason to be hopeful. The mighty changes of the last thirty years give us more than confidence for the future. The Protestant of the present generation is growing up under very different circumstances from those of the past. On every side he is brought more or less under Catholic influences ; he sees even the Evangelical parish priest falling in with Catholic progress ; he is familiar with restored churches, choral worship, more frequent Sacraments, in a word, a more Catholic tone of religion ; while the careless, indolent, slovenly style of the past is everywhere condemned. External events also are not without their force ; the combination of Nonconformists with Secularists to deprive the children of the Church of their rightful heritage of religious teaching, the proposed invasion of our churchyards, the attempt still further to tamper with our marriage laws in the interest of incest, the cry for secularizing the endowments of the Church, will only serve to make the Church more united and bring closer together her sons for common defence ; and consequently to a better understanding of each other, and a more harmonious action. The Protestant within the Church will learn better to understand his Catholic brother, when they have to work side by side for mutual defence. Surely then we shall see something like that spoken of by the prophet : " The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off ; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

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Studies in Modern Problems.

THE BISHOPS ON CONFESSION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CONFESSION in the Church of England, after a comparatively peaceful career of usefulness in bringing souls to GOD through the consciousness of the reality of sin and of the need of pardon, has lately again entered into a troubled phase of theological controversy. Its open and extended practice in every part of the country, through a series of many years of revived use amongst both clergy and laity, has been followed by a challenge equally plain and only less widespread: the doctrine of Confession, so far as regards its acceptance by the Church of England, has been publicly, and even authoritatively questioned. The challenge has produced two results: it has invited inquiry; and has itself become, indirectly, missionary in its effects. By a law of Nemesis, which inevitably follows a public denial of the truth, the protest has already led to an extended practice privately; and, it may be predicted, will lead to a still wider use of this means of grace. In the meantime, it may be convenient to examine the question afresh, and to estimate what the World may have to say on the doctrine and practice of a Sacrament of the Church.

The controversy on this occasion has taken a form which is the best possible form it could assume in regard to the interests both of truth and virtue: certainly the safest in relation to those who voluntarily originate the strife; perhaps the least offensive to those who are unwillingly drawn into it. It has taken the form of an abstract theological proposition. In former years the controversy on confession, unhappily for all

concerned, took a concrete form. It became, in the course of its miserable discussion, an essentially personal question. Whether it was the case of Mr. Prynne at Plymouth, or of Mr. Beckett at Leeds, or of Mr. Poole of S. Barnabas, or of Mr. West of All Saints, Boyne Hill, individual priests stood at the centre of the dispute or were made the point of the controversy. Neither was the personal element the only disagreeable feature of earlier discord. There was also the element of impurity. Credulous or designing men, and even women, men without wit enough to elaborate a consistent and self-contained charge, men without sufficient religious feeling to allow them to keep clear of the questionable in such cases, did their utmost to ruin the priest and to compromise the faith. It is hardly too much to say that England was raised from Land's End to John o' Groat's either by deliberate falsehood or by wanton exaggeration, which the words "questions in the confessional" will recall with distinctness to those who remember or can refer to the records of twenty years ago. On the present occasion, however, the element of impurity, as well as that of personality, has entered but little into the controversy on confession.

It is true that an effort has not been wanting to introduce into the controversy one of these elements. A cry, similar to the one last named, worded in vague and general terms, not pointed indeed at any given priest, but applicable to all who minister confession to sin-sick souls, has been tentatively raised. A nobleman, whose philanthropic work as a younger man will always cover his name with honour, allowed himself to pander to the vilest instincts of morbid controversy, and without a shadow of evidence to impute indelicacy to others. Such imputations, lacking any pretence at proof, it is hardly possible to suppose could have suggested themselves to a mind kept pure and clean before GOD from childhood. *But the attempt, thank GOD, to blacken the character of those*

who are doing His work in a way other than the slanderer thinks best, was impotent. Within the walls of Exeter Hall, indeed, the noble lord, a mournful spectacle of power misapplied and now decayed, was cheered to the echo by like-minded members of his own religious party. But without such narrow bounds, and in society at large, the tone of a press by no means scrupulous of an opponent's character, nor over-careful of its own morality, was on this subject eminently satisfactory. By the more respectable portion of daily journalism and of the weekly reviews, the surmisings of Lord Shaftesbury met with a prompt and severe rebuke. From the date of that ignominious failure to make capital out of the latent impurity of poor fallen human nature, the controversy on confession has taken a more generous and purer, and it may be added, a loftier and more honest tone. We are now again able to touch upon the delicate and difficult subject of confession of sin without having to overcome by the force of personal integrity, or of character freed from aspersion, the preliminary prejudice that we, the clergy of the Church of England, are victims of impure minds, or even subjects of impure actions. And it may be mentioned as a noteworthy fact in regard to the wide-spread use of confession, not only that there is absolutely nothing which approaches to a "Confessional case" before either the Church or the world, at the present moment; but also, that there has not been such a case during the last fifteen years of the revived use of the sacrament. This is the more remarkable when it is remembered, that during this period confessions have been freely heard, not only by priests "discreet and learned" in years or wisdom, but also by "young men," even by "young men without experience," though not by "young men without any authority from the Church," as the bishops are reported to have said in Convocation. The thousands of confessions received weekly throughout the country by clergy of all ages, and of

every degree of experience or the reverse, without the faintest breath of public scandal, is a fact which impartial observers should not be allowed to overlook or forget.

To a large extent this absence of the two elements of personality and impurity in the discussion of Sacramental Confession, is due to the proximate cause of the present controversy. We owe to the "Petition of the 483," celebrated or notorious as it may be estimated, the impersonal character of the present crisis in the Church, as well as the moral cleanliness of its treatment by the world. And from this point of view the petition may at least claim a medium position between two opposite estimates which have been made of the document. It may not, indeed, rightly claim the unlimited praise bestowed upon it by the too-indulgent Archdeacon of Taunton, that it is the wisest theological document which has appeared since the Reformation—the wisest, because the honestest and truest. Neither need it be bound to accept the gratuitously disparaging description given of it by the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, that by reason of the comparative paucity of names which it attracted, apart from the value of its demands and the position of its signatories, the document represents $2\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* of folly in the Establishment. Judged by its fruit above named, judged by its effecting the object which its promoters had in view, with a success beyond their most sanguine expectations, the petition of the 483 may fairly take a middle position. Its divine folly has originated renewed attention to a sacrament which is once again asserting its influence for good over the "moral independence and virility" of the nation, by making England more dependent on GOD'S help, and not less manly in the true courage of daring in this life to face past sin. Its human wisdom has become apparent in the direction which it has enforced upon the controversy, as an abstract theological problem rather than

as a personal or moral question. The honesty of the petition no one impugns. It is perhaps only too transparently candid.

It is not easy to take a fresh line in regard to Confession. Each fresh attack, however, demands a fresh defence, specially in cases in which new elements of discord are invented, or in which a new class of disputants attach themselves to the controversy. The question which more or less incidentally entered into the exhaustive demands of the 483 petitioners has been discussed in many works of varied merit or importance during the onward march of the Catholic Revival in the last forty years. Most of these books and pamphlets selected for examination a different side of the Sacrament of Absolution. It would not be devoid of interest, did space permit, to consider what may be the various aspects of which they treat. It must suffice to say, from the nature of the case, that none of the works already published, either have or could have treated the subject from the standpoint of the present essay. The ancient and modern precedents ; the Catholic, Anglican, and even Protestant authorities : the scriptural and dogmatic proofs ; the social, legal, and practical claims ; the argument from theology, necessity, and expediency ; and the *argumentum ad hominem*—all have been urged with more or less success, and some have been well-nigh exhausted. Yet is there at least one other view which may be taken, a view which has been only glanced at partially by any previous writer. That view is the opinion of her rulers, the bishops, at the present day on the question of Confession in the Church of England. To this view the following pages are devoted.

There are two, and may be more than two, objections against making an attempt to take this view of Confession.

At first sight it would seem to be difficult to obtain the opinion of living authorities, on a question upon which authority, in the person of bishops, is so discreetly cautious, not to say cautiously reserved. Yet, if reserve and caution could be

overcome by efforts however great, if a judgment might be pronounced with calmness under a sense of responsibility, the value of such a result, be the opinion for or against the Sacrament, would be equal to the efforts made to obtain it. Whether or not with the dispassionate consideration which befits the question, the judgment of the living episcopate of the southern province, almost to a bishop, has been pronounced. It has been pronounced in a variety of ways and with different degrees of authority. The opinion of fifteen bishops was fully and freely given in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury in May, 1873. Since that date have been published a series of manifestoes from individual members of the bench, which have taken form in charges, addresses, sermons, letters, answers to deputations, and speeches at public meetings. These manifestoes can all be traced to the presentation of the Petition of the 483; and for such results importance may fairly be claimed in proportion to the difficulties which attended the preparation, and to the dangers which followed the publication, of this petition. Thus the first objection has been overcome: and none who have studied the debate in Convocation, or the subsequent personal utterances of our bishops, can doubt of the exceeding importance of such expressed opinions of the living rulers of the Church.

But there is a second objection to be answered. At the outset it was proposed to weigh the verdict of the world upon this sacrament of the Church. Now, it is proposed to estimate the world's verdict by the pronouncements of the bishops. There is no valid objection, there is no real contradiction here. The opinion of the episcopate may be taken to represent at once the friendly and hostile opinion of both the Church and the world at the present day. Is this a hard sentence to pass upon the bishops' words, that they reflect the sentiments of the world, not only in its active opposition to *the practice*, but also in its languid assent to the principle of

confession? It may be termed severe, but not with justice; and that for two reasons. If one will call to mind the mode of nomination and election to the chief offices of the Establishment by State authority; the class of clergy from which, as a rule, the episcopate is recruited; the atmosphere, either self-chosen or enforced, which unfortunately surrounds our bishops from the date of their elevation; the position which they necessarily fill in the political and social world; and the influence which society at large cannot but, and unhappily does, exercise upon the right reverend bench—he will be forced to own that a colourable argument has been advanced for the theory above stated. But further, if the reader will be at the pains to compare the spoken utterances or written words of living bishops with the printed observations, of anonymous journalists, and will note the decided and marked agreement which they mutually present, the colourable argument will rise in probability almost to the level of demonstrated proof. Whether the papers and reviews were inspired by the episcopate, or whether the bishops condescended to examine the index-hand of popular opinion, it is not for the present writer to decide. He would rather adopt a third explanation, namely, that the speeches of their lordships and the articles of the newspaper writers come from a common source. They both represent, in a greater or less religious form respectively, the current ideas on confession of English society in the latter half of the nineteenth century. And to be enabled to estimate the opinion of the world in regard to this sacrament, after it has filtered through the mind of those whose profession is that of saving souls, and hence, after it has lost some poisonous ingredients in the process, is a clear gain to a common faith which ought not to be ignored.

These obstacles being removed, and having not only secured the judgment of the episcopate directly, but also indirectly the verdict of society, it may be allowed that the

utterances in question are of importance to the cause at the present juncture. They are important negatively, because they enshrine in a religious form the objections of men by profession religious to the revived practice of confession. And if the bishops' objections may be satisfactorily answered, it is reasonable to suppose that the objections of the religious world, if not of society at large, will be lessened and perhaps removed. But they are still more important, positively, because they contain an amount of support for the doctrine of confession as it bears upon the practical part of religious life; from the heads of the Church, of which few who have not weighed the debate in Convocation, amongst other episcopal utterances, can possess even a faint idea. And if the bishops' advocacy of confession may be widely circulated, it is reasonable, again, to suppose that the faithful in each diocese, if not society generally, will not fail to respond to the implied invitation of their fathers in the faith, to make use of the means of grace in question. On the objections of our bishops to certain phases or developments of confession, as practised or supposed to be practised in the Church of to-day, little or nothing need be said. But on the advocacy of the sacrament of penance by the bench as a whole, with whatever limitations and conditions, something will be urged. Many may have entertained a vague idea that any given bishop supports the theory of confession with his general approval. But none could realise the decided and positive manner in which the episcopate has advocated its practice, if they had not made the debate in question an object of study.

Of course, as the sequel will show, this opinion is offered broadly without qualification. No attempt will be made to conceal the exceptions which the bishops have thought it right to take upon certain details of confession; upon the manner and mode, or the frequency of its use; upon the *qualifications* of those who administer, or the requirements of

those who use the sacrament ; upon its relation to other questions with which it is not irrevocably connected, and upon the language which some adopt who preach or write of confession. Such **exceptions** have been taken. They have deeply offended the religious instincts of all who believe that the real advantages of confession, apart from its sacramental character, outweigh the disadvantages which some think may attach to its employment. And the offence has been intensified by the language used in correspondence or debate, language which, probably, the right reverend prelates now deplore equally with those who always regretted it. Whether or not, on the other side, the decided advocacy of the sacrament by the bishops, even qualified by exceptions, will be equally palatable to those who abhor confession, however limited, it is beyond the scope of the present paper to inquire. But it may be, and will be shown hereafter, that, on the whole, the tone of the bishops is distinctly and positively in favour of confession ; and though they allowed themselves to think and speak hardly of some elements in the controversy, yet that their judgment in the main is at one with those who advocate its theory and have revived its practice.

It is important that such episcopal judgment should be as widely known and plainly stated as possible. It is important both for us who labour in the Catholic Revival and for our rulers. It is important for us, indeed, it is essential to crown our efforts with entire success, that we should be able to affirm upon evidence that the majority of our bishops are in harmony with ourselves, at least in principle. The imputation of disloyalty to the Church, so galling to many minds, and in most cases as unjust as galling, will thus either be altogether checked, or be shared with the priesthood by the episcopate. And it would be specially valuable in any sermon—or in simultaneous sermons—on the subject, which might be preached in a given diocese where the clergy are de-

nounced as unfaithful to the Church of England in their use of this Sacrament, to be able to quote the testimony of the diocesan, not, indeed, as an unqualified partizan of the ancient discipline of the Church, but under conditions as an actual advocate of its principle. It is important also to the bishops themselves. For it would be equally ungenerous and ungrateful for us to refuse to share with them the credit, when in the face of public opinion they have elected to share with us the blame of the restoration, under whatever restrictions, of the practice of the confession of sin to a priest.

Of all the pronouncements of the bishops, their speeches in Convocation are at once the most unhesitating and the most weighty. To these speeches almost exclusive attention will be devoted in the present essay : and for this reason, because they represent the formal expression of the bishops' opinion, delivered in their official capacities, upon formal petition by their clergy. It may be urged, of course, by each side respectively, either as an extenuation of much that was said against confession, or by way of qualification for much that was said in its favour, that the bishops were taken by surprise ; spoke, as one declared, "on the spur of the moment ;" and gave vent to words which they would gladly, and we ought willingly to forget. Such excuses seem to be utterly unworthy both of the scene and of the actors. The occasion was solemn —if not, no corporate meeting of the episcopal bench could ever deserve the epithet. The petition was the grave, serious, and deliberate judgment of those who signed it. It formulated the opinions and indicated the practice of men who were certainly in earnest, and who both said what they meant and meant what they said. Those whom they approached with "humble petition" were not only their fathers in GOD, and bishops of the Church, but were representative men selected, by the dominant political party for the time *being in the State*, to rule the Establishment. Moreover, the

bishops themselves acknowledged the gravity and importance of the occasion and subject. They dignified the petition by holding a long debate upon its requisitions. No single prelate remained silent. Out of a large number of questions which the inferior clergy brought before their ecclesiastical superiors, chiefly relating to the ceremonial of the Church, the bishops deliberately, and for reasons yet concealed within the episcopal breast, selected a religious custom, involving sacramental dogma, on which to proclaim to the world their individual judgments. And they resolved the whole House into a committee, in order further to consider this matter.

Under similar circumstances imagine representative men, in lines of life other than theological, being asked their opinion upon technical questions within their own special sphere of thought. Suppose a politician from his seat in Parliament, a leader of the Liberals, were required to answer a formal question upon the Corn Laws, or a Conservative a question on Manhood Suffrage. Suppose a mathematician were asked to explain a proposition of Euclid, or a classic to decide on a disputed rule in syntax. Suppose a general were requested to state his opinion on a matter of elementary tactics ; or an admiral, on a matter of elementary seamanship ; or an eminent jurist, on a matter of elementary law ; or an eminent chemist, on a matter of elementary science. In any of these cases can we conceive that such representative men would fail to return a plain, straightforward, honest expression of their opinion ; an opinion which they would not shrink from having proclaimed at Charing Cross ; an opinion which neither their friends would seek to explain away, nor their enemies care to exaggerate ? And let the reader remember this—that the bishops are, or ought to be, representative men : that the requisition placed before them was based upon a fundamental principle of religion : that the question asked was an elementary question of the common faith : that any

one of the 483 (saving only those of the eleven deserters who signed without reading) would not have failed to express an opinion, of whatever worth, for which similar excuses would have been neither needed nor offered. Are we or are we not justified, then, in taking the expressed opinion of the bishops on an elementary practice of the Christian religion, as the deliberate and formal judgment of the Church's representative men, and in dealing with such opinion impartially? It cannot be denied that we are justified. We should be disloyal to the Church in acting otherwise.

Another excuse made for the attitude taken by the bishops in this crisis it is difficult to mention, from the seeming want of respect both to office and person which is involved in entertaining such an idea as possible. Men say that a difference exists between the public utterances and the private views of our fathers in GOD: and they say so, or some say so, in a spirit partly of justification, and partly of gratulation, not at all with a sense of profound humiliation that the idea were conceivable. No means are at hand to test the truth of such a charge. There are, however, two facts which point towards its truth. One consists in the private estimate which is held by some of his clergy of any given bishop as bishop, being notoriously at issue with the public valuation, in the like capacity, of the same ecclesiastic. Of course such a circumstance possesses its favourable interpretation. Of course, too, it may be explained in a manner adverse to the single-mindedness of certain members of the episcopate. The other reason which gives force to the judgment of the world—a judgment in which we need not concur—is the line which individual bishops privately adopt towards the practice of confession, both as priests and diocesans. The present writer abstains from mentioning names: but he is in no way bound to be silent. And when we find bishops who speak or write *publicly* in the most severe terms against confession—

in reply to Protestant agitators, parishioners "aggrieved" by the pious confessions of their neighbours or otherwise—themselves hearing confessions; themselves examining and licensing, or licensing without examination, confessors in their dioceses both for special and ordinary action; themselves asserting of a certain manual which had been "presented" to them, that if it did not advocate compulsory confession, nothing could be said against it; themselves, in a semi-public manner declaring to the priests of a mission, that they must gauge their success by the number of confessions they receive—then, it may be affirmed, not that the charge is true, but that there exists unhappily a certain foundation for the charge, that the private and public words and actions of our bishops are not always in absolute uniformity.

One more preliminary point deserves notice. Evidence can be adduced to prove that the written or spoken objections of the episcopate to confession are objections in detail and not in principle. This involves a distinction with a real difference. Hence, when we claim, as we do claim, the authority of the bishops for the use of a Sacrament of the Church, we are keeping strictly within legitimate bounds, and are not taking an unworthy advantage of the utterances of the episcopal bench in our favour. This position will be apparent to the reader if he considers first principles in Church reform, or if he takes a parallel case to confession in the present religious revival amongst us. In the revivification of a Church from the deadness of the Georgian era, or the incompleteness of the Evangelical movement which succeeded to the torpor of indifferentism, it is only in the nature of things that of minds equally honest to the idea of reform, some should be willing to accept the principle together with the practice, and some should be content to accept the principle apart from the practice. The latter position alone concerns our argument. A clergyman might fairly assert to the principle

of revived ceremonial, that Divine Service should be conducted with decency and in order, who never wore any less uncommon vestment than the old-fashioned English surplice. Again, it would be manifestly unjust to complain of a priest who only did not use incense, that he failed to adopt the ritual practice of the Catholic Revival. There always must be left a margin between a principle which cannot be denied, and a practice which may be employed; even between one development or detail and another. And it would be unjust to the episcopate to affirm that they failed to acknowledge a Sacrament of the Church, because they felt it their duty to take exception to certain adjuncts not necessarily attached to it, and to certain results which do not always flow from it.

On the 9th May, 1873, was presented to the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, by the hands of his grace the President, "the Humble Petition" of 483 priests of the English Church. There were present the Archbishop, Tait of Canterbury, the Bishops, Jackson of London, Wilberforce of Winchester, Ellicott of Gloucester and Bristol, Ollivant of Llandaff, Moberly of Salisbury, Harold Browne of Ely, Durnford of Chichester, Claughton of Rochester, Selwyn of Lichfield, Atlay of Hereford, Campbell of Bangor, Mackarness of Oxford, Hughes of S. Asaph, and Magee of Peterborough—fifteen prelates (out of twenty-one comprovincial bishops) in all. The petition, which was eventually printed together with its signatures in the columns of the "Guardian," consisted in type of four closely printed octavo pages; and was chiefly concerned, first, with deprecating any changes in our venerable Book of Common Prayer; and, secondly, with urging the not unreasonable plea, if further changes should be made, that alterations may be considered from a Catholic standpoint as a counterpoise to those of a Protestant character. *The penultimate* clause, a short paragraph of five lines, con-

tained the harmless germ which has developed the Confession controversy of the present day. It stands as follows in the published copy, and attention is invited to the literal and grammatical signification of all its provisions, for to this, and to this only, are they pledged who signed the document :

“ That, in view of the wide-spread and increasing use of Sacramental Confession, your Right Reverend House may consider the advisability of providing for the education, selection, and licensing of duly qualified Confessors, in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law.”

The meaning which those who promoted the petition intended to convey, appears from the letter of the secretary of the committee entrusted with its preparation. It is well to place this meaning on record, because the clause in question has been misapprehended. After quoting the words of the petition, the secretary proceeds to say :

“ We had no idea of desiring to limit the freedom which the Church of England has for three centuries, at least, accorded to her priests and people in the matter of hearing confessions, and choosing to whom they should open their griefs. The words ‘ in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law ’ clearly show that any idea proposing that only a certain number of priests licensed *ad hoc* should be permitted to hear confessions, was completely absent from our minds. Such a proposition would not only not be in accordance with, but would be utterly opposed to, the provisions of Canon Law. In fact, there can be no doubt that Convocation would be powerless to take away the ordinary jurisdiction of beneficed priests, which, resting on the general Canon Law, could only be modified by an Œcumenical Council ; nor, so long as the licence of assistant curates remains such as it is, could the bishops or Convocation restrain them in the free exercise of their delegated jurisdiction. And in the case of other priests who exercise jurisdiction *ex consuetudine*, arising from the general practice of Western Christendom, it is more than doubtful whether even a provincial synod could change this. What we did desire was, that all priests should be carefully educated in moral and ascetical theology, and such studies as are needful for a due and prudent exercise of the priestly office in the confessional ; and that priests specially qualified for this work should, if not beneficed or otherwise licensed, receive special licences enabling them to act freely throughout a diocese, and in the case of eminently qualified priests, whether beneficed or not, that they should have licence to hear confessions throughout the province. We desired that such licences might be given in order to avoid all scruple or doubtfulness as to the jurisdiction of such priests. This was what was meant by

the words 'in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law.' But we disclaim any idea of restricting, either directly or indirectly, that wise and salutary liberty by which 'the Church of England leaves her children free to whom to open their griefs.' We desire practically to increase that liberty."

Having regard, then, to the intention of the petition as a whole, and to the object which the petitioners had in view in the wording of the obnoxious clause, it is remarkable that when the address was presented to the Upper House of Convocation, the bishops should have both overlooked the general intention and also ignored the special object. In the place of discussing the document as a declaration of principle, their lordships deliberately singled out the final clause but one, on "Sacramental Confession," for consideration, and devoted a long debate almost entirely to that subject. In no petition, however brief, are all the points which are demanded of equal weight or moment. In all petitions of similar length to the one under review, there must be weak points amongst those that are strong. None know better than those who, after long and anxious thought, drafted and amended the document in question, that all its positions were not unassailable. Indeed, they could have themselves indicated the weak points on which they would least care to be attacked. But it did not for a moment enter the mind of the most sanguine to imagine that the bishops would avoid the less defensible points in order voluntarily to lay siege to an impregnable position, and to attack it with the certainty of repulse. Yet, for reasons hitherto concealed, though not difficult to be conceived, the episcopal bench overpassed all the ceremonial requisitions of the 483 petitioners, and fastened apparently with eagerness, and certainly with perseverance, upon the dogmatic clause which referred to the use of confession.

The result of this unadvised selection, and the subsequent inopportune discussion, has been as calamitous to the enemies, as it has been helpful to the friends of the faith. So far as *the bishops* either positively deprecated, or negatively failed to advocate, the restored use of a sacrament of the Church

so far have they secured for the petitioners the sympathy and support of the whole of the great High Church party. To how wide an extent this support has been afforded, and by how many men of position and influence this sympathy has been felt, the "Declaration on Confession and Absolution, as set forth by the Church of England" lately issued is more than suggestive. In influence, if not in numbers, the present expression of opinion on behalf of the inculcated doctrine will certainly bear comparison with the last celebrated Declaration of five thousand clergy in regard to the Church's threatened ceremonial. Many and many who at first took exception to the ritual requirements of the 483 now practically cast in their lot with them, when they stand in the position either of confessors for the faith under the contumely of the world, or as defenders of the faith at the bar of the bishops. And perhaps nothing of late years has done so much to consolidate the High Church party on the question of confession, as the attack which has been made on certain aspects of the sacrament from the episcopal bench, or on the sacrament itself by popular journalism. In spite of much apparent dissatisfaction and even criticism on the part of friends, at the date of the presentation of the Petition, the course of events has proved how much the Catholic Revival is really indebted to the well-abused but self-sacrificing 483. No doubt, occasion has been given to blasphemy: but this is inseparable from corporate or even individual action in public for the faith. No doubt, those who hesitated to accept the Church's teaching, conscience-smitten of their own personal need of confession, hesitate yet more after the pronouncements of certain bishops. No doubt, some who lacked arguments against the sacrament have had their deficiency supplied from the episcopal utterances. But will any venture to affirm that a single soul who believed in and practised confession has ceased to practise what he believed, in consequence of the

bishops' words in Convocation, or of the published criticisms of the press? Will any venture to deny the experience of priests who testify, that since the attention of the world has been again directed to the teaching of the Church on Confession, their penitents in number have sensibly increased?

Before the public utterances of the bishops are more distinctly referred to, it may be well to attempt to place the reader in possession of the mental position of those whose petition formed the subject-matter of debate in the Upper House of Convocation. What may be supposed to have passed through the minds of these priests, with the knowledge of sin with which they had become officially conscious, over and above their personal self-knowledge, and the knowledge of society at large gained by them as citizens of the world? This inquiry is not without importance: for the petitioners are men as well as priests, are gentlemen as well as clergymen; they do not hear the confessions of others without themselves using the same needful discipline; they must be familiar with human sin, and may take measures for its cure without breaking the sacred seal of confession. What then passed through their minds?

Here we find, they mentally argued, a city, a nation, largely or wholly given to idolatry; to idolatry not of carved images, but of self-seeking, of covetousness, of money-making, of drunkenness, of lawlessness, of every kind of impurity, literary, social, and domestic. Here we find, in the language of one who will not be accused of being a disciple "secretly for fear of the Jews," Mr. Herbert Spencer—here we find society honeycombed with wickedness of a certain kind, "fraudulent bankrupts, getters-up of bubble companies, makers of adulterated goods, users of false trade-marks, retailers who have light weights, owners of unseaworthy ships, those who cheat insurance companies, those who carry on turf chicaneries, and the great majority of gamblers."

Here we find the daily papers filled continually with offences of another sort—with offences against the person, life or limb; wife-beating, which seldom secures a meet reward at the hands of the magistracy, and the desertion of wives and families, on which misdemeanour as affecting the rates they are severe; child-injuring, or the neglect of the insane or of idiots; murders, known in popular journalism as “mysteries,” the perpetrators of which often escape justice; “baby-farming,” or other modes of systematic infant-killing, in the case of illegitimate children by their unhappy mothers as systematically condoned; and even worse evils in regard to the marriage state and its unborn offspring, which revelations now and then prove, in both cases, to be widespread and not to be confined to the lower orders of society.

Here we find, again, legislative measures levelled against the law of purity in marriage. We find them negatively, in that the soul-destroying details of the Divorce Court are not prohibited, as they are in France, from being sown broadcast, as incentives to lust and crime, all over the country; but also positively, in the anti-Christian relaxation of the law of holy matrimony, unknown to the Church of the All-pure, and in the threatened permission of legalised incest, whereby a man may be at liberty to wed with his own sister by marriage. Here we find the natural result of all this social and religious *anomia*, in details too gross for public recitation, in the unprecedented sensuality of our men, and in the want of modesty, not less calamitous, of our women. For instance: the hideous extent to which the “social evil,” as it is euphemistically termed, has grown; and the revolting opposition of the sex chiefly concerned socially, to its regulation, mitigation, and eventual suppression: the immoral union of divorced men and women in the lifetime of their respective wives and husbands: the intriguing which is commenced between separated couples for themselves, and even by mothers on behalf

of daughters, before legal divorce has been obtained, to allow them to marry or re-mate without social stigma: the open, suggestive, or vulgar impurity of lower-class sensational novels eagerly devoured by upper-class readers: and the immodest tone of conversation, and details in letter-writing common in what is called Society, and that not alone amongst men. Here we find, once more, the sin of excess in the use of stimulants, whether or not it end in drunkenness, abounding in all classes, flourishing in some; amongst both sexes and all ages; with differences indeed in detail, both of degree and result, but with the same taint of sin before GOD.

This in substance, and more or less defined, is what passed through the mind of those who prepared, and of many who signed, the Petition of the 483 priests.

And what answer to such searching of heart did their right reverend fathers in GOD make to priests who, in their strivings against sin, certainly cannot in this instance be justly charged with ignoring the claims of the episcopate to advise with the priesthood under circumstances of difficulty?

Suppose for a moment that such a cry had come up from a body of clergy to their bishops in the middle ages, or even in earlier times. Suppose that priests who were cut to the quick with a sense of the sin of the age in which they lived, and before which they were called to witness as ministers of righteousness by "boldly rebuking vice," had thus addressed themselves to their ecclesiastical superiors. Suppose they had humbly petitioned a holy synod which numbered amongst its members bishops of world-wide mark for the love of GOD in their hearts, and for the love of man in their lives—bishops, too, who joined active holiness with the devotional instinct, and could not be called mere dreamy or contemplative enthusiasts. Suppose that a François de Sales, or a Carlo Borromeo, or a Fénelon, or a Hugh of Lincoln; or, to recall saints of a former age, that a S. Ambrose, a S. Augustine, a S.

Chrysostom, a S. Gregory, or a S. Anselm, had been sitting in solemn conclave : and to saints and bishops of such a stamp as these that a cry from their clergy had come up before them and their GOD, and publicly before all men. What reply, think you, reader, would have been returned by these God-fearing, soul-loving, sin-hating men, when they were asked, "in view of the widespread and increasing use of Sacramental Confession, (to) consider the advisability of providing for the education, selection, and licensing of duly qualified Confessors, in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law"? Can you doubt for a moment what would have been the answer of the Bishops of Geneva, of Rome, or of Hippo; of either saintly prelate of Milan; of the Archbishops of Cambray, of Canterbury, or of Constantinople? Can you doubt that it would have contained words of sympathy, words of commendation, words of encouragement to those who petitioned? Can you doubt that love would have been its origination, its mainspring, its outgrowth—the love of GOD, of man, of souls, of sinners? Can you doubt that Christian concern for sin-sick souls would have been expressed; that Christian efforts for their release from bondage would have been recommended; that Christian success in the miserable war against the world, the flesh and the devil would have been foretold, aye, and eagerly desired on behalf of those for whom petition was made?

Yet, what answer was really returned by the episcopal successors in office, if not in spirit, of these saints, confessors, and doctors of the Church? What message of love to GOD and mercy to man had our bishops, the Taits, the Moberlys, the Harold Brownes, the Ellicotts, the Magees, the Claughtons, the Mackarnesses, the Ollivants, and the Jacksons of our day to give to our clergy? What expression of earnest desire for saving souls, what burning words of love to GOD fell from the primate and his suffragans in solemn council assembled? Did

the Archbishop of Canterbury bewail the coldness and deadness of the love of Christians in society, and the "spurious religionism" of the world at large at the present day; and did his grace lovingly point out the truth in regard to the Christian theory of the forgiveness of sin through the channels of the Sacraments? Did the Bishop of Salisbury second the efforts of penitents in breaking through the toils of habitual, life-long, perhaps even of constitutional sin, by urging upon them corresponding efforts after contrition under the "Divinely permitted" rules of the Church on Confession? Did the Bishop of Ely, as an overseer of GOD's vineyard, strive to "encourage" the priesthood, young and old, in their arduous, self-denying, painful, wearisome labours in the confessional, when crowds of penitents force themselves upon a priest's compassion, and force the priest to execute his holy office? Did the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol maintain, that the Holy Communion being the normal food of Christian men and women living in the world, and aiming even in the lowest degree at holiness of life, its due preparation—by persons at their own discretion availing themselves of the express invitation of the Church—could not by any strain of language be termed "exceptional?"

Again: Did the Bishop of Peterborough, in the spirit of his Divine Master, assert, that in spite of possible objections from the world and actual danger in the Church, yet sin being so exceeding sinful, those who would loyally combat with it under the "sanctions of Canon Law," by avoiding "the evil of irregular confession," should be specially commended? Did the Bishop of Rochester, "in view of the widespread use of confession," and speaking through the medium of newspaper reports to the little ones of CHRIST'S flock, advisedly declare that a godly habit in using means for sanctity authorized by the Church could not be begun too early, even "from the day of their confirmation;" or in view "of providing for the

education and licensing of duly qualified confessors," and speaking to his right reverend brethren, did he implore them for the love of GOD to further and not to "restrain," exertions of the priesthood against sin for the benefit of the souls of men? Did the Bishop of Oxford, putting aside all attempt to prejudice the cause under consideration by the use of party "language about what is called 'Sacramental Confession'"—as unworthy of the dignity of the occasion, the position of the speakers, the earnestness of the petitioners, and the importance of what was urged—predict, that the faithful employment of the power of the keys would not only largely increase the influence of the Church of England, but also would surely advance the greater glory of GOD? Did the Bishop of Llandaff, in sympathy with the highest development of the religious life, or in compassion to the lowest depths of "human sin and misery," hold, that to the cloistered life of "ladies who are called Sisters of Mercy," confession was a most sweet and blessed privilege, and to the life of penitence it was a most needful if bitter discipline? Did the Bishop of London advocate the practice of the Church in regard to the confession of sin, as tending both to correct "the want of a diseased spiritual life," and to supply a real want to persons under temptation, strength to lead a godly life, a quickening impulse to the sluggish conscience, and intense realization of personal responsibility before GOD, and union with GOD?

It cannot with truth be affirmed that either the primate or his suffragans, as ministers of CHRIST and stewards of the mercies, as well as the mysteries of GOD, allowed themselves to utter such words as these—words which, as a matter of course and spontaneously, would have risen from the heart and flowed from the lips, I will not say of the saintly bishops of old, but of any one of the 483 of the inferior clergy who ventured to address their lordships. With one noble exception, that of the Bishop of Chichester, and with the exception of a faint realisation

of the relation between man's sin and GOD'S love, and the means to cancel the one by the other, from two or three other bishops, every speech of every prelate was distinctly hostile to the spirit of the petition. It is true, that with almost if not equal unanimity, the bishops, Balaam-like, were forced to "bless" the Sacrament of Penance in the abstract, whilst yet they were far from blessing it in the concrete. It is true that, saving a single bishop, one and all the members of the Upper House admitted the principle of confession of sin ; but, worse than Balaam, at the bidding of the world, one and all, again with a single exception, sought in each detail of its practice to "curse what GOD hath not cursed." Hence, this remarkable inconsistency between episcopal principle and episcopal practice made itself apparent.

In reply to the 483 clergy who applied to their ecclesiastical chiefs for counsel and direction, for help and co-operation in the grandest, loftiest, and most absorbing of all human occupations, the labour of saving souls as fellow workers with GOD, the bishops of the Church of England of to-day answer in this wise : "Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice it must not be sacramental in character. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice, even under constant temptation, it must not be habitual ; and, under a free government, it must not be compulsory. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice it must not be otherwise than free, exceptional, occasional, discretionary, optional, and voluntary. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice it must not be administered by young men, it must not be frequented by young women, it must not be taught to children of either sex. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice its employment by laity who seek it must be restrained, and those only of the clergy who are specially licensed by bishops who use it not, must be allowed to receive *confessions*. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in

practice it must be approached by others than those who are obviously striving after a religious life, by others than those who have avowedly and heinously fallen into deadly sin. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice it must not lead to direction, which is radically bad. Yes : Confession is good in principle—but in practice it must be discouraged rather than advocated ; priests must be inhibited instead of being licensed ; the faithful must endure a want and not seek to have it supplied, as there is “no Church so much at sea” on this question as the Church of England, and there is “no way in the Church of England of meeting the want.”

Is this a parody of the bishops' answer ? If so, it is full of the most divine *eironeia*. But it is not. For each apparent, and in many cases real, antagonism between the bishops' judgment and the bishops' advice, there can be produced, and there will be produced, the bishops' words in conjunction with the bishops' names. In effect, if not in form, the above reply represents the answer made to the petitioners. In each individual paradox the very language and expressions of the reported speeches in Convocation have been employed. Of course the above arrangement of the replies is the writer's own : it could not be otherwise. But it can be honestly said, that the impression left on his mind by repeated perusal of the debate in question is the one which he has attempted to convey to the reader. In any case, of success or failure in the attempt, the source from whence both impression and language have been drawn is easily accessible ; and misquotation or misconception can be as easily corrected. But neither can be truly charged. Specimens of the very words of the bishops to their petitioners, quoted from the official reports in the “Chronicle of Convocation” (Rivingtons) of the debate on the 9th of May will now be transcribed. Whether or not they support the estimate above formed of the bishops' opinions, the reader will then be in a position to judge. The

extracts are printed *verbatim et literatim*, together with such expressions within brackets as the sense demands under the exigencies of quotation. The order observed in making the quotations from the bishops' speeches is the order (with one exception) in which their lordships spoke in debate.

To begin with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who spoke twice, both at the opening and at the close of the debate on "Confession in the Church of England." His grace is reported to have said: "I have had occasion to study the subject very seriously, and to express my opinion very fully upon it very early in my episcopate . . . endeavouring to draw that very distinction which is obvious to the minds of all of us, between the unburdening of a burdened conscience, such as the Church of England allows, and that sort of sacramental and indispensable confession which the petitioners want to encourage," and which his grace had previously denounced "as a most serious error." Yet, the archbishop added: "The point has this difficulty—it is very difficult to lay down general rules which limit the free intercourse between a clergyman and his penitent parishioners on the one hand, and which put down sacramental confession on the other." As if "free intercourse between priest and penitent, in the unburdening of a burdened conscience" could either legitimately or effectively be conducted otherwise than by "sacramental confession": or as if both the term and the practice of sacramental confession were unknown to, or had been unrecognized by, former and even greater metropolitans, who had not neglected the study of the subject until promoted to the purple.

The (late) Bishop of Winchester, who also spoke twice, was of opinion, "that the practical difficulty of dealing with the question is at this moment extreme. . . . On the one hand, it is impossible for us to endeavour in any degree, by merely putting down this abuse of confession, to injure the consciences of those, who, being burdened, do absolutely need

the relief which GOD has provided in His Church. On the other hand, there is the exceeding danger of encouraging the spread of that which I believe is doing great evil among us. . . . The real difficulty lies very deep, and perhaps can be met only by our taking every opportunity of setting forth that, while the Church of England does not only allow, but under certain circumstances recommend, the burdened soul to seek the ministry of the Word" . . . "that is as different a thing as possible from . . . young and unpractised men, not commissioned by any authority of the Church, taking upon themselves the very difficult and perilous office of being general confessors." As if, on the one hand, priests as priests, young or old, lacked such authority from the Church in virtue of their ordination; and the laity, as penitents, had not the right of choice in a confessor expressly given them by their Prayer Book: as if, on the other, the 483 petitioners themselves had not earnestly prayed for authoritative regulations to prevent abuses in the exercise of their own undoubted power, and of their people's undisputed right.

"Fully and entirely agreeing in what has been said about the danger we may fall into," the Bishop of Salisbury knows "the necessity which exists for licensing persons for this purpose, and not allowing others to accept or receive confession. At the same time (his lordship adds), I must refer to the words of the Prayer Book, which define in some sort, as things are now, the kind of persons who are to receive it . . . and (he thinks) it is a matter of very great importance that some rule should be laid down whereby it may be determined who are the 'discreet and learned' persons who should be licensed for the purpose. As the words stand, there is a certain discretion, and that I fear is left to the applicant." Yet the bishop is of opinion that "habitual confession is equivalent to compulsory confession, and is unholy, illegal, and full of mischief." As if habitual and compulsory were convertible

terms: as if sin was not habitual, or even minor faults, or omissions, or evil thoughts and wishes were not habitual: as if men and women could not and did not of their own free will, without compulsion and with earnest desire, adopt a religious habit: and as if the invitation to confession in the Prayer Book repeated weekly was not itself suggestive of voluntarily and optionally adopting the habit of confession.

"There are certain cases (namely, the two oft-repeated cases) in which the Church of England," says the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, "distinctly sanctions confession. I would gladly avoid the use of hard words (his lordship adds); but rather say, on the one hand, that the Church of England does clearly recognise confession under those exceptional circumstances; but on the other hand, speaking singly for myself, I would record the opinion that she recognises it in no other way." I believe, the (ex) Bishop of Ely avows, "that the Church of England encourages persons with burdened consciences to come to the pastors of their parish, and unburden themselves of their griefs, when they do not feel themselves prepared to receive the Holy Communion without so unburdening their hearts; and also encourages the pastor of the parish to move them to confession, if there seems to be any burden on their minds when upon the bed of sickness or apparently near to death." Yet the Bishop of Rochester knows "that in some churches confession is publicly preached and impressed upon the young from the day of their confirmation onwards; and (thinks) that some course ought to be adopted in order to restrain that teaching." As if the reception of confirmation were not made, either in will or deed, an absolute condition by the Church of England upon which the young are admitted to Holy Communion: and as if, whatever may be urged of a case of sickness which ends in death, though death is not the end of all cases, the reception of the *Holy Communion* by those striving to lead "a godly, righteous,

and sober life, to the glory of GOD'S holy Name," could by any straining of language, be termed, or indeed be desired by the bishops to be made, "exceptional."

"Our Church," declares the Bishop of Peterborough, "regards the act of confession simply as an optional and discretionary resort of a person with an aggrieved conscience to the pastor of his own parish," which may be taken "with its attendant advantages or disadvantages." But "while the doctrine of habitual or compulsory confession is taught and preached . . . in our Church, the only way to meet it is either to correct the error by better teaching, or to punish such teaching if it is really illegal." As if any theologian could gravely maintain a difference between an "Act of Confession," and the "Sacrament of Penance," as practised in the Church, save one who is capable of declaring, as a bishop, that he disbelieves in the latter, and is critically powerless to distinguish between "habitual" and "compulsory" confession: as if any bishop of the English Church in his heart really believes confession to be "illegal," and dares to issue an inhibition to any ordained priest to surcease from such illegality. When we find a bishop sufficiently convinced of the illegality of the sacrament to justify him in forbidding a given priest to hear, or a given layman to make confession—to forbid them as Christians on his authority as bishop—then we may pay due respect to words which are uttered on "the spur of the moment," and seem to be uttered with a view to popular effect.

"During the last few years," said the Bishop of Llandaff, "two institutions have been very much adopted in the Church of England, and I think that it is a most happy circumstance that they have been instituted: I allude to Houses of Mercy . . . and Sisterhoods." In the case of Sisterhoods, where one kind of a higher form of the religious life is cultivated, and in the case of Penitentiaries, tenanted by those who unhappily have fallen into the lowest form of sin, in both

these extremes the Bishop of Llandaff heartily wishes it "could with confidence be affirmed in every case" that the charge were false that "the practice of confession is adopted in these houses." Both extremes of life viewed from a religious standpoint, namely, efforts after sanctity and positive degradation in sin, are equally removed from either need or benefit of confession, in the opinion of his lordship.

The (ex) Bishop of Ely ventures to say, with no expression of regret, that though "at the present moment the Church of England is more at sea upon this question probably, than any other Church in existence;" yet, it seems to his lordship, and the opinion is reiterated by the bishop, "that the mind of the Church is that the pastor of the parish is the right person to whom any one should apply" for confession. The Bishop of Bangor "can conceive that there are some directions in which a salutary check might be given to those abuses (mentioned by the bishops who had spoken) without incurring the great evils of depriving earnest and awakened persons of means of assistance which they require . . . and without repressing, may still restrain to some extent, and render that safe which is so often connected with the greatest evils in our Church." The Bishop of Hereford, though he holds "to the evil of confession when compulsory," testifies to "the great advantage of it when it is the seeking of the soul for spiritual relief;" and indeed feels strongly "that as a medicine confession may be of very great use, but that as a dram it ought to be forbidden." The Bishop of S. Asaph agrees very much in what had been said, "that there is a want which is not fully met in the Church of England. We have no means, so far as I can see (his lordship continued), of meeting that want effectually in the practical working of the parochial system." The Bishop of Lichfield uttered these important words: "I do not like to remain altogether silent *on this subject*, so thoroughly convinced am I that the con-

fession indicated in the Church of England is voluntary and not compulsory; that it is occasional and not habitual; that in the choice of the person to whom confession is made there is very great freedom allowed, or otherwise the disburdening of the conscience would not take place." Yet the Bishop of Oxford permitted himself at this crisis to say that "the thing which is to be condemned, and which cannot be too strongly condemned, is the language which is used about what is called 'Sacramental Confession.' I think that is a thing which is leading to a most serious error in the minds of the generation growing up, and it is perverting the influence of the Church of England in no small degree. The whole end of the Sacrament of Confession I believe to be a purely Romish one, and it cannot be sufficiently repudiated by us." And the Bishop of London is betrayed into still more objectionable language. Confession, said his lordship, as "a system of going to a priest from time to time, or at definite intervals, always before, or frequently before, the reception of Holy Communion, as a means not of quieting the conscience under special circumstances, but as the ordinary means of obtaining strength to lead a godly life; that that kind of confession springs from a real want I should be loth to admit—it may be the want of a diseased spiritual life . . . I believe that if the want arises in any human soul of throwing off the burden of personal responsibility, the noblest gift which GOD has bestowed on man—if he feels the want of getting rid of his own conscience, and putting it into the hands of others—I believe that that want arises from a morbid state which requires not to be encouraged, but to be sternly, though kindly repressed." As if a system, as all our bishops allow, avowedly sanctioned by the Church, under whatever restrictions, and apart from abuses which all concur in deprecating, as if a system which supplies a want not fully met in our parochial organisation, as if a system attended with advantages not easily exaggerated—could be

fairly and honestly chargeable before man with being a mere question of theological terminology, or could be justly described before GOD as the legitimate result of agencies fatally detrimental to man's highest and truest interest.

The above quotations from the speeches of the bishops contain, with one exception, the more important utterances of their lordships on the subject of the present essay. Much else was spoken in Convocation which offers material for anxious thought and respectful criticism. It may help us to form a just estimate of the opinions of the bishops on Confession in the Church of England, if certain other statements of their lordships be annotated.

To begin, again, with the Archbishop of Canterbury. "Having read the petition, his grace (the primate) added: I concur in a remark which has dropped from the Bishop of Winchester (but was not reported), that it is desirable that no person should be allowed to confess to any one whatsoever without (the confessor) being licensed thereto. It is by no means my opinion that every clergyman should be licensed; but certainly no person ought to be allowed to receive confession without a licence." A wide question as to Jurisdiction in the Confessional is raised by these words. It is doubtful whether the archbishop intended to rule this matter, as the petitioners begged that it might be ruled, "in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law;" or, as the bishops usually pronounce on similar questions, in accordance only with the existing formularies of the Church of England and the degenerate custom of its members. But in either case it may safely be affirmed that the judgment of the primate cannot be upheld. So far from "no person (being) allowed (on either hypothesis) to receive confession without a licence," 1. certain priests in the Catholic Church have ever had not only order, but jurisdiction to "receive confession," under the

sanctions of Canon Law—amongst them beneficed priests with cure of souls ; and 2. the modern Church of England, throwing herself, as has been said, on the tradition of an age anterior to the full development of Canon Law, has distinctly repudiated the theory which, apart from such development, the archbishop would inflict upon us : for the “Church of England leaves her children free to whom to open their griefs” unfettered by any licence. But, in conjunction with the concluding speech of his grace (above quoted) these words are of high value in the controversy on Sacramental Confession. The Primate of all England hereby inferentially commits himself to the position, that priests with licences may legally hear confessions in the Church of England, as by law established. For so authoritative a statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury we can hardly be sufficiently thankful. In view of such concession to the principle of confession, is it too much to hope that, having regard to the “want” acknowledged by the Bishops of London and S. Asaph to exist, there may be a speedy restoration of the office of Grand Penitentiary for the Southern Province at Lambeth? Pending such restoration, it will be a support to many hard-working clergy to be assured that the principle of confession thus conceded by the metropolitan is supported by many of his suffragans, notably by the Bishops of Winchester, Salisbury, Gloucester and Bristol, Peterborough, Ely, Chichester, Bangor, Hereford, Lichfield, Oxford, and London.

Commenting on the primate’s speech, the (late) Bishop of Winchester, with that love for souls which endeared him to those who were privileged to know him, and with whom he was pleased to work in the vineyard of the Church, is reported to have said : “Of course, your grace’s words were not intended to mean that when one with a burdened conscience, who is thereby rendered unable to communicate, comes before any priest of the Church of CHRIST, the priest is not bound

to give him spiritual advice and consolation, and to do all in his power to heal that conscience. That your grace, of course, never intended to condemn." The good bishop's further remarks have been already quoted. Considered as a whole, the bishop's speech in Convocation distinctly involved the principle that, under given conditions, the practice of confession in the Church of England is not only lawful as the archbishop holds, but also expedient: indeed, by implication, that a priest is bound to hear confessions.

Notwithstanding certain hard words, and disappointing too, from one who years ago, in the chair of Winchester College, to some extent was a confessor for the principle which now on the throne of S. Osmund his lordship ignores, the Bishop of Salisbury is reported to have said: "I think that occasional confession, under circumstances of necessity, is a matter Divinely permitted, and ought not to be entirely put down by the Church of England. It ought, however, to be under rule and government, and the rule and government ought to be precisely that only certain persons should be allowed under any circumstances to accept it; but we want a rule for the purpose further than what is contained in the Prayer Book." It were a curious speculation to imagine at what point, in the opinion of the Bishop of Salisbury, a "matter Divinely permitted" ought to be "entirely put down by the Church of England." Awaiting any solution of this enigma, no imagination is required to perceive that the bishop, in both the later and earlier parts of his speech, agrees with his most reverend and right reverend brethren who preceded him in holding confession to be lawful in the Church of England as a matter of principle, and as a matter of practice to be in urgent need of regulation and direction, even more severe than the Church of England herself enforces.

After pointing to the existing law of the Church of England on confession, first in the case of the sick, and secondly

in the case of the whole, "in the well-known passage in the exhortation in the Holy Communion," the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol adds his testimony to the lawfulness of the Sacrament both in principle and practice. But the bishop endeavours to cover his admissions by drawing a distinction. Of the exhortation his lordship says: "It is not confession generally that is here alluded to, but confession in reference to distrust in GOD'S mercy, and disquietude of conscience—or in other words, it is exceptional confession. It would seem, therefore, I venture to think, perfectly clear that the Church of England regards confession as exceptional." This expression of the bishop's opinion, again, opens a large field of enquiry. His lordship's objection may best be answered by a quotation which will command more respect than any argument the present writer can urge.

The Bishop of Carlisle, in a sermon preached a few weeks after, and with avowed reference to the debate in Convocation, has examined this point, the exceptional character of confession in the Church of England, and has pronounced upon it. With a far wider and more varied experience than the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol as a parish priest, his lordship's evidence may fairly be balanced against, if not preferred to, the utterances of the last-named prelate. In seeking to estimate "the mind of the Church . . . on this somewhat thorny subject" the bishop in due time arrives at the "two cases in which the Church of England counsels confession, not directly to GOD, but to GOD'S minister." In these two cases, on the grounds both of "common sense and common humanity," the bishop pronounces "that the counsel is wise and good." And after indirectly expressing his opinion on the priest who has not, in his ministerial career, received confessions, his lordship meets the question: "Is the opening of the burdened heart . . . to be actually and absolutely confined to those two cases?" In opposition to his brother

prelate of Gloucester and Bristol, the Bishop of Carlisle decides that it is not to be so confined. It seems, says the bishop, "somewhat arbitrary to say that what is good under these special circumstances is good under no other circumstances whatever. . . . So that I do not quite see my way to tying up closely the benefits of private confession to any one or more special cases : in fact (he adds) there is no reason to suppose that the Church of England intended this;" (p. 11) and the bishop quotes the Homily on Repentance.

The (ex) Bishop of Ely in his speech boldly enunciates the principle which Dr. Pusey ventured to put forward in 1850, that "the Church of England leaves her children free to whom to open their griefs." In the first instance, his lordship says, and here again gives his adhesion to the practice of confession of sin to a priest, the person with the burdened conscience is referred by the Church to the pastor of his parish. But, continues the bishop, "as we know, there may be cases in which it would be extremely difficult . . . for persons to unburden their minds to the pastor of their parish . . . the Church opens to them another course"—the alternative which it is needless to quote. This adhesion of the bishop to the principle of confession in the Church of England is clenched by remarks which fell from his lordship at a later stage of the debate. The bishop approaches the question "with the deepest sense of (its) importance:" and in view of the "strong feeling among some persons in the Church that there ought to be an extension of the practice already existing" gives publicity to sentiments which are, alas, as rare amongst episcopal utterances on confession, as they are truly Christian. The (ex) Bishop of Ely was not afraid to say that he "should be very sorry indeed if anything went forth from (that) house which could add to the burdens of tender consciences, or prevent them from obtaining those *legitimate* means of relief which the Church has in all ages

permitted, and which our Church also permits." Did they stand alone, these words have almost the ring about them of the words of S. François de Sales. Unhappily they do not.

The Bishop of Rochester occupies the unique position of being the only bishop in the Upper House on the 9th of May from whose speech no single word of commendation can be extracted for the great religious movement, or any of its results, by which he is overpowered and which he in vain attempts to stem. His lordship, however, appears to be hardly more in accord with his right reverend brethren than with those of whom he openly "disapproves," and whom he would seek to "restrain." In opposition to almost every bishop, his lordship appears to hold that not even "the service for the Visitation of the Sick (nor) the Communion Service" afford any sanction to "the public and habitual teaching of clergymen on confession:" and, without any qualification and in the most general terms, that the "practice is disapproved (as he believes) by all (their) lordships." The above quotations from the speeches of the other prelates is a sufficient reply to the Bishop of Rochester. Yet may his lordship be quoted with effect on one point. The bishop is evidently impressed with the truth of the opinion he has formed on the extent to which the revived use of confession has reached, and to its rate of increase; for in a short speech he repeats the opinion twice. "The evil" of confession, his lordship affirms, and more than one bishop was found to sympathise with this episcopal judgment, is "rapidly extending," and "is spreading very widely and very fast." Such an avowal, from so unprejudiced an authority and so unexpected a source, will carry comfort and support into quarters which the Bishop of Rochester would little care either to support or to comfort.

Whilst the Bishop of Bangor agrees with the Bishop of Rochester, both on the matter of fact that confession in the Church of England is "a custom which has got more and

more general" and also on the personal estimate of such extension of confession, that it is deplorable, his lordship differs from his brother prelate in the view he takes of confession as a means of grace. "I quite agree," says his lordship, with "the Bishop of Chichester, that the feeling which is at the bottom of confession is one which lies very deep indeed in the human heart, and I consider the present custom in the Church of England . . . is a symptom which shows that we are passing from greater deadness to greater spiritual life." Again, at a later stage of his speech, the bishop is reported to have said: "The great distinction which is to be made between the use and the abuse of confession is this—in the one case it is constantly approximating to the formal confession of sins . . . without any marked intention of leaving or forsaking the habits . . . confessed: in the other case—in the deep distress of mind under which persons severely tried fail in obtaining peace—the conscience may seek the assistance of the Church in the person of some minister . . . and in telling out their griefs they may obtain some consolation." With this definition of the use and abuse of confession, most Catholics probably will agree. They will be thankful for such true words, which may be fitly compared with those which fell from the Bishops of Winchester, Ely, Lichfield, and Oxford, though uttered by one who, with the Bishops of Salisbury and Peterborough, spoke of "the extreme evils, not of compulsory, but of habitual confession."

From the speech of the Bishop of Oxford, both the advocates and the opponents of confession may freely gather materials for the support of their respective arguments. Yet much which it contains is patient of a Catholic interpretation. His lordship alone, probably, can reconcile what has been above quoted with that which remains to be quoted from his words. *But nothing* which the bishop said can eliminate the force

of the following testimony. Circumstances, his lordship declared "have brought me into the experience of a large number of cases where the practice of confession seems to have brought persons who have used it great help and comfort, and as they think, very decided advancement in their spiritual lives. It is not for me to condemn them; neither do I think that it is for this House to condemn them." Again: "I wish to say one word of protest against some observations that have been made with reference to parish priests. . . . No one can say it would be an answer to many grieved and distressed persons to say—'Go to the clergyman of your parish.' They would laugh such a suggestion to scorn, and it would be ridiculous to use it. I would rather say to them—'You are at liberty to find any clergyman in whom you can trust:' and I would say to the clergyman—'You are not bound to reject them because they are not of your parish.'" Once more: "There is a considerable number of young men at college of such an age and state of life that it would be an inestimable benefit to them to be able to go to some wise, kind, and experienced clergyman who would be able to help them in their trouble and distress. . . . I think that if we could . . . relieve the young men more freely, a great advantage would be gained to the Church." Such words do honour to their speaker; and, in spite of the conditions with which they were unhappily surrounded, in other parts of his speech, the Bishop of Oxford may be fairly quoted in favour of the practice of confession in the Church of England. Their value to the cause may be accurately estimated by the vigour of the opposition which they immediately evoked. The Archbishop of Canterbury permitted himself to offer the following comment, after their quotation, on the bishop's words: "I should very much like to know (said his grace) whether a sort of spurious religionism is not substituted in the place of a manly, true Christianity in many cases

even amongst young men ; and I can conceive it quite possible that even undergraduates in a University may be induced to frequent confession without any real amendment in their lives." When the primate condescends in such terms to criticize the pastoral experience of one of his suffragans, and to point in scorn at the penitence of sinners for whom his suffragan pleads, it were better, both for the office and for the holy religion that created the office which his grace fills, to maintain a respectful silence.

"Our Church," says the Bishop of London, in combating the opinion of the Bishop of S. Asaph, "has the means of meeting the want, so far as it is a real and healthy want, in the minds of those who are burdened in conscience, as is pointed out in the Book of Common Prayer, either on those occasions when the conscience is unquiet and alarmed by the self-examination without which we cannot approach the Holy Table ; and when in sickness, taking a retrospect of the past, the burdened soul pours forth its sorrows and sins to the ears of him who visits as his minister and who can give the benefit of such absolution as we believe he has the power to grant. I cannot think the Church has not got . . . the power of meeting that want." It would be difficult to point to a more complete authorization, couched in language studiously moderate, of the practice of confession in the Church of England, than is afforded by these words of the Bishop of London.

The speech of the Bishop of Chichester, as by far the most important pronouncement in the debate, has been reserved for a final quotation. Considering the circumstances, occasion, and place of delivery, the speech can only be termed a noble, manly, independent, and withal a Christian expression of opinion—a speech of which the bishop's friends have cause to be proud, and the bishop's clergy have cause to be thankful. The words have already borne fruit. It behoves *us to take care that such truly episcopal utterance be not*

allowed to fall to the ground without further benefit to the cause which we, workers in the Catholic Revival, have at heart.

The key to the pronouncement of the Bishop of Chichester is contained in a short after-speech, in reply to the strictures of the Bishop of London. My argument, said his lordship, "was, that there is a certain phenomenon as to confession which is more apparent now than ever it was before. That phenomenon should be explained: and I explain it by the greater want which is felt for the unburdening of consciences, and by the greater earnestness shown for the salvation of souls." On the motion "that a committee be appointed," the bishop is reported to have said: "There is a general prevalence of habitual confession—it is much more general than many of us would desire. We are then to report on the teaching of the Church on the subject; but has any one of us the smallest doubt as to what the teaching of the Church is? It is contained in a very few pages of the Prayer Book, and there alone; and I suppose the committee would not feel themselves justified in going further than the Prayer Book in quoting the opinion of eminent doctors and members of the Church. . . . I have not spoken on the general question; but it behoves us all to deliver our minds upon it as far as we can. . . . Now, I consider myself justified in speaking of this question, because I know that the system of confession is largely prevalent in my own diocese. It would be more philosophical to consider whence comes this system of confession, and how it has extended. The reason must be that there is a great and confessed want for confession. . . . People's minds are more awakening as to the state of their souls. Old men and old women, young men and young women, think more of their souls now than they used to do. They feel the weight, the burden, and the misery of sin, and they look everywhere for a remedy. . . . The Church of England is coming round to acknowledge the necessity of confession in

some shape, and this is more generally felt than it ever was in former times. This we are to trace, not to the teaching of this man or of that man, though no doubt that has had its effect, but to that admitted want in the souls of men. It is to that that we are to trace the prevalence of confession in our day, and it should be our desire to direct and guide that. It cannot be our duty, and it certainly is not our wisdom, to repress it. If we try to repress it, see what the consequences will be. There are many people who are indisposed to respect the authority of . . . bishops, who, they say, are forced upon them by the State. . . . If we try (to repress confession) we shall only be laughed at for our pains, and we shall be accused of exerting an authority which does not belong to our office, and merely sitting in our chairs in our sees, in order that we might put a damper on all true and vital piety. That would be the sort of reproach which would be levelled at us. Repression, then, I think, is perfectly impossible : but the guidance of confessing may be possible. . . . Of all the duties that can fall on a minister, (a confessor's) is beyond all measure the most delicate and difficult. All of us must feel the insufficiency of human beings for such a task ; for the deepest love and the profoundest piety of the most perfect Christian hardly justify a man in hearing the confessions of his fellow sinners. . . . We cannot restrain the right (allowed by the Church of England) : the moment we attempted to restrain it we should find that we should miserably fail. . . . What, then, can we do ? I think that in our confirmations we might teach those who are confirmed that while confession in certain cases is a most excellent and admirable Scriptural remedy provided by the Church, 'direction' (i.e., as his lordship elsewhere explains, 'such as [the Latin Church] employs') is as great an evil. . . . Another opportunity is afforded in preparing candidates for ordination, when we *might* show them the true grounds on which the Church of

England justifies and approves of confession. . . . But any measure of general repression I do believe would not be acceptable to the Church of England generally viewed. I feel that it would utterly fail, and, moreover, I think it would deserve to fail, because I believe there is a great and confessed necessity for some such dealing with the hearts and consciences of devout people ; and it is those which of all others we must respect and desire to respect, and those which of all others we should be loth in the smallest degree to wound. As to the choice of confessors—the most important of all possible things when a person is grieved in conscience—that the Church leaves to all persons asking help. . . . I would also draw attention to the fact of the prevalence in the present day of missions. . . . Missions always more or less awaken consciences ; and awakened consciences will seek for relief by the open door of confession : so that the more I consider this subject, the more I consider it hopeless to attempt the repression of confession. All that we can do is to endeavour to direct and guide those who feel themselves qualified to act as confessors, and who have a very difficult and delicate duty to perform.”

Enough has now been quoted to justify the estimate already made in general terms of the bishops' speeches in the Upper House of Convocation ; and it only remains to produce, from the very words employed by their lordships, their official opinion on confession in the Church of England.

The utterances of the English bishops upon confession are in various degrees important to the world, to the Church, and to the 483 petitioners who were instrumental in eliciting them. From one point of view, indeed, they are of no moment at all to any of these sections of society. As the opinions only of clergymen who have passed middle life in careers which, as a rule (with respect for the office, be it said), have not required that continuous study of the science of

theology which would command respect for, if not submission to their words, these reported speeches of the bishops would not carry much weight with any class of society. But in these clergymen the world sees, and rightly sees, the responsible heads of the Church; sees, in the nominal union of Church with State, representative men which have been chosen by the last to rule the first; sees bishops of the Church in Convocation, and spiritual peers in the House of Lords. The Church sees in these dignified ecclesiastics the chief pastors of CHRIST'S Church, or as the Bishop of Ely said, the "guardians of the purity in doctrine and discipline of the Church of England;" the successors of the Apostles, and the bishops whose public action of itself at the least compromises the Church, and, if confirmed by the Church, binds her. The 483 priests, and those who are at one with them, see even more. They see fathers in GOD whom, though in no sense of the word representatives of the priesthood, they have elected to petition on a matter of life and death to souls entrusted to their care, and on whose answer much depends—more than the petitioned imagine, more than even the petitioners could realise.

And to what does such answer amount? Without risk of contradiction, it may be asserted that the sentiments of many of the 483 are expressed when, in view of the episcopal utterances on the sacrament in question, a "*DEO gratias*" has been said for the answer which, as a whole, our LORD was pleased to send us. Of course, it was not the answer which saints of the Church from the depths of their love would have offered to us, or which doctors of the Church from the stores of their learning would have published to the world. But then, not all the bishops who spoke may be considered doctors; not all may be accounted saints. Of course, it was not the answer which we should have given to ourselves; neither was it the answer which we could have anticipated, or *actually* imagined. It was at once a surprise and a dis-

appointment to us: it was at once better and worse than we hoped. Of course, the answer was not consistent with itself, was not conciliatory in form, was not unimpeachable in substance. Indeed, it was in many ways the opposite: and worse than all, it was oracular. Yet from its many-sided terms may be framed a self-contained and even harmonious expression of opinion. For in spite of obscurity, in spite of inconsistency, in spite of denials and limitations, in spite of innuendo and outspoken depreciation, the bishops in Convocation assembled authoritatively pronounced:

That Confession—without indeed the prefix “Sacramental,” yet as the Bishop of London affirmed “to the ears,” Auricular Confession—is an integral portion both of the formal doctrine and of the actual practice of the Church of England at the present day, as by law established.

Had the petition of the 483 succeeded only in eliciting this expression of opinion from the heads of the Church, under the influence of the existing crisis, the petitioners would have earned the gratitude of the Church. But they were still further rewarded for their otherwise ill-requited boldness in addressing the bench of bishops on such a question. Subject to no qualification whatever beyond what the Prayer Book enforces, the entire bench, with hardly an exception, and with much variety of expression, distinctly commended the practice of confession, and nearly in each case pointed to the parish priest as the ordinary and legitimate ecclesiastical officer charged with the reception of the penitent. Subject to stipulations which, for clearness sake, have been tabulated, the judgment which has been collectively pronounced may thus be described in detail from the lips of each individual bishop:

I. If it be not “sacramental and indispensable” in the sense in which the two greater Sacraments are declared by the Church Catechism to be generally necessary to salvation; or if it be not the result of a “spurious religionism” which

would "substitute a sort of outside repentance for real and deep repentance." (Archbishop of Canterbury.)

If it be not declared essential to the "highest Christian life;" or if it be not "abused" by such a "perpetual confession as is, in fact, the direction of the soul by another." (Bishop Wilberforce, of Winchester.)

If it be not "habitual" in sense of, or as "equivalent to, compulsory:" (Bishop of Salisbury.) Or, if it be not used as a "dram," but only as a "medicine." (Bishop of Hereford.)

If it be not administered by one who sets "himself up as a general confessor without any authority but his own." (Bishop Harold Browne, of Ely.)

If it be not "the want of a diseased spiritual life," which "arises from a morbid state;" nor the "throwing off the burden of personal responsibility;" nor the "getting rid of (a man's) conscience; nor the putting it into the hands of others." (Bishop of London.)—Or, on the other hand :

II. If it be the "free intercourse between a clergyman and his penitent parishioners." (Archbishop of Canterbury.)

If it be the "exceptional case of a burdened and unquiet conscience." (Bishop of London.)

If it be "occasional, under circumstances of necessity." (Bishop of Salisbury.)

If it be an "optional and discretionary resort of a person with an aggrieved conscience, to the pastor of his own parish." (Bishop of Peterborough.)

If it be "voluntary and occasional." (Bishop of Lichfield.)

If it be the furnishing of "earnest and awakened persons of means of assistance which they require:" (Bishop of Bangor.) Or, if it supplies a "want which is not fully met in the Church of England." (Bishop of S. Asaph.)—

Then, in any of these cases, either negative or positive, the bishops of the Church of England distinctly and positively *enunciate* the truth that,

III. Confession is a "matter Divinely permitted" by GOD. (Bishop of Salisbury.)

Confession is "distinctly sanctioned" and "clearly recognised" by the Church. (Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.)

Confession is not only "allowed" (Archbishop of Canterbury), but also "recommended" (Bishop of Winchester); is not only "permitted," but even "encouraged" by the Church. (Bishop of Ely.)

Confession is of "great advantage" (Bishop of Oxford); possesses "attendant advantages" (Bishop of Peterborough); and "may be of very great use." (Bishop of Hereford.)

Confession, to "persons who have used it," has brought "great help and comfort," and would prove an "inestimable benefit" to "young men at college." (Bishop of Oxford.)

Confession is of value to the "consciences of those who being burdened do absolutely need the relief which GOD has provided in His Church." (Bishop of Winchester.)

Confession supplies "to the fullest extent good for us and for man," "the want of spiritual aid" which is so widely felt. (Bishop of London.)

Confession "is a most excellent and admirable Scriptural remedy provided by the Church:" the Church of England "justifies and approves Confession;" nay, more, "is coming round to acknowledge the necessity of Confession." (Bishop of Chichester.)

Confession "allows of very great freedom . . . in the choice of the person to whom (it) is made." (Bishop of Lichfield); and "leaves (a man) free in his discretion to seek any one . . . whom he thinks to be discreet, learned, and godly." (Bishop of Peterborough.) And lastly,

Confession should be made by the faithful, in the first instance, to their own "pastor," to the "pastor of the parish," to the "pastor of the church." (Bishops of London, Gloucester, Ely, Salisbury, and Peterborough, and the Archbishop.)

The judgment of the bishops on Confession will variously affect members of the different schools of thought within the Church of England. To the High Church party as a whole the debate in Convocation will prove, if not a matter of unmixed gratulation, at least in its results a solid and positive gain. Two views, of course, may be taken of it ; and if some are content with the bishops' adhesion to the principles of the English Church as limited by her formularies, others will rejoice at the providential over-ruling of personal prejudice in favour of Catholic tradition. But to the Low Churchman, and also to the Latitudinarian, the debate must be altogether unpalatable. They can derive neither satisfaction from what was allowed in deference to a common Christianity, nor consolation from what was denied in regard to a particular development. In truth, the bishops have, by their deliberate utterances, drawn a wide and impassable line between themselves and Infidels on the one hand, and mere Protestants on the other. Against the latter, they clearly declare their assent, under certain conditions, to the practice of private Confession to a priest ; and affirm it to be lawful. Against the former, they dogmatically assert their belief in priestly Absolution, without any qualification whatever ; and admit its supernatural character. The proof of these statements is to be found in the speeches of the bishops already quoted, and in the Report of the bishops printed below. It is of some importance for the world to learn that on these two points we, clergy of the Catholic party, are absolutely at one with our ecclesiastical superiors in the Church, in opposition both to blank sentimental Scepticism, and also to cold heartless Protestantism. If the debate in Convocation, caused by the Petition of the 483 on Sacramental Confession, has effected nothing more than this, it has done good service to the Catholic Revival.

ORBY SHIPLEY.

Notes.

THE BISHOPS ON CONFESSION.

It is worth while to remark, that at the date to which this essay refers, Dr. Wilberforce was the Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Harold Browne was at Ely.

REPORT OF THE UPPER HOUSE ON CONFESSION.

THE following Report of the committee of the whole House appointed on the 9th of May to consider and report on the teaching of the Church of England on the subject of confession was laid on the table by the archbishop :

"In the matter of confession the Church of England holds fast those principles which are set forth in Holy Scripture, which were professed by the Primitive Church, and which were reaffirmed at the English Reformation. The Church of England, in the 25th Article, affirms that penance is not to be counted for a sacrament of the Gospel ; and, as judged by her formularies, knows no such words as ' sacramental confession.' Grounding her doctrine on Holy Scripture, she distinctly declares the full and entire forgiveness of sins, through the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, to those who bewail their own sinfulness, confess themselves to Almighty GOD, with full purpose of amendment of life, and turn with true faith unto Him. It is the desire of the Church that by this way and means all her children should find peace. In this spirit the forms of confession and absolution are set forth in her public Services. Yet, for the relief of troubled consciences, she has made special provision in two exceptional cases : (1) In the case of those who cannot quiet their own consciences previous to receiving the Holy Communion, but require further comfort or counsel, the minister is directed to say, ' Let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of GOD's Word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of GOD's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice.' Nevertheless, it is to be noted that for such a case no form of absolution has been prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer ; and further, that the rubric in the Prayer Book of 1549, which sanctions a particular form of absolution, has been withdrawn from all subsequent editions of the said book. (2) In the Order for the Visitation of the Sick it is directed that the sick man be moved to make a special confession of his sins if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, but in such case absolution is only to be given when the sick man shall humbly and heartily desire it. This special provision, however, does not authorize the ministers of the Church to require from any who may repair to them to open their grief in a particular or detailed examination of all their sins, or to require private confession as a condition previous to receiving the Holy Communion, or to enjoin, or even encourage, any practice of

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habitual confession to a priest, or to teach that such practice of habitual confession, or the being subject to what has been termed the direction of a priest, is a condition of attaining to the highest spiritual life."

BISHOP WILBERFORCE OF OXFORD AND WINCHESTER ON "WHOSE SINS SOEVER YE REMIT THEY ARE REMITTED."

IN his first "General Ordination (Sermon) in the Cathedral Church of Christ, Oxford, Dec. 21, 1845," the bishop uttered the following words :

"First, we should have a firm faith in the reality of what we are doing. The same words are to be spoken to-day as those which broke of old the silence of that chamber, when the risen LORD stood beside the amazed eleven . . . and said, 'Receive ye the HOLY GHOST . . .' These same words are again to-day to be spoken, as in His Name, and as if He were present with us. And all this is the most blasphemous frivolity if it be not the deepest truth. But truth it is ; the self-same truth as that which turned the madness of that upper chamber into a reality which has subdued the world. Only let our faith lay hold of it ; for CHRIST is with us in spiritual presence as truly as He was with them. What are the 1800 years which have since passed to Him? Still there is a Church within and a world without . . . a Church within dwelt in by His secret presence . . . As we may thus see how we should all this day be affected, so may we see, further, the proper issue of this day's service. Here is, first, the strength in which each one of those sent forth is to labour. . . . In spite of appearances, at all times in his ministry, there is strength for him . . . These sacraments they are not naked signs of man's invention ; they are His appointment, and, received by faith, are full of Him. . . . And then, farther, as there is here sketched out their strength in labour, and the claim of their unearthly mission, so is also the nature of their charge—they are sent to bear witness of CHRIST's resurrection. . . . This, then, my reverend brethren, is henceforth to be your charge. . . . This is to form the burden of your sermons ; this is the meaning of your absolutions ; this is the acted language of the blessed sacraments you minister. For this you are endued with a power above your own ; not a magical power which shall act by a law of external force upon resisting agents, but a spiritual power which shall brood over their spirits, awaken and answer voices in their deepest heart, fan the rising flame of love, win over the hardly yielding will, and lift, in the might of GOD's grace, the man and the society to GOD their SAVIOUR." (pp. 24-28.)

THE SAME ON PRIVATE CONFESSION.

IN comparing the intention of the Church of England on the subject of private confession with that of the Church of Rome, the bishop, in his "Ordination Addresses," says : "As to this important subject, our Church never designed that the ministers of GOD's Word and Sacraments should abdicate that which is amongst *be most important functions* of their office, the dealing of the ministers of GOD

with the consciences of men." The bishop then delivers his judgment on the "object of the Roman Communion" on the question of confession, and thus continues: "The object of our own Church is to awaken, enlighten, and strengthen the conscience, that with the aid of Holy Scripture and the ordinary ministrations of GOD's Word, it may rightly guide the individual soul." And again: "The Church of England, in exact conformity, as we maintain, with the Word of GOD, and the teaching and the practices of the primitive Church, allows private confession, instead of enforcing it, and recommends it only under certain prescribed circumstances and conditions as means of restoring health to a sick conscience, instead of treating the habit of confession as the state of health. She treats it, as the wise man treats medical aids, as blessed means of renovation, stored by GOD's mercy for their need in times of sickness, but still as means for, and not compatible with, a settled habit of strong health." And once more: "If it be earnestly desired, we must ourselves receive, as GOD's ministers, the spiritual confidence of the burdened soul; but we must do all this with the distinct aim of restoring the conscience to that healthier action in which it shall be able to guide the soul which GOD has, with the gift of individual personality, committed to its watchfulness and keeping." ("Address vi." p. 112, &c.)

BISHOP WORDSWORTH OF LINCOLN ON PRIVATE CONFESSION OF SIN, AND LICENSING CONFESSORS.

IN the "Twelve Addresses delivered at his Visitation," the Bishop of Lincoln says: "Let it not be supposed that we would in the least degree disparage that sober and comforting use of the ministry of reconciliation which Holy Scripture and the primitive Church sanction, and which the Church of England commends to her children in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. No: on the contrary, we feel persuaded that in this, as in other matters, the abuse of what in certain cases and under certain restrictions is good and wholesome, holy and wise, has created a prejudice against the use of it. . . . The Church of England recommends private confession of sin to those of her children who cannot otherwise quiet their own consciences. . . . The Church of England does not enforce confession as a rule, but she admits and approves of it as an exception" (pp. 113—115). Again: In his speech at the Nottingham Church Congress in 1871, the bishop is reported to have said: "The moderate and temperate and wise use of confession recommended by the Church of England had fallen into contempt, and become almost obsolete." (Quoted in "Confession," by Rev. C. N. Gray, fifth edition: a pamphlet which contains a valuable catena of Anglican authorities.) Again: In his late charge the bishop publicly made "request, that no persons may be invited to come into (his) diocese to hold missions, and to hear confessions without being first duly authorised by the bishop to do so." (p. 115.) Inferentially, therefore, his lordship is prepared to give the needful authorisation for licensing confessors. The bishop, further, recommends to the attention of his clergy the work of the Arch-

bishop of Milan, S. Carlo Borromeo, "Monita ad Confessores." Perhaps his lordship may be induced to add this book to the list of those recommended to candidates for holy orders in the diocese of Lincoln.

BISHOP MOBERLY OF SALISBURY ON SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

THERE has been much to cause the disappointment of Churchmen in the episcopal utterances of one who as a priest was held in high estimation. His lordship's latest action, however, might almost have been anticipated. The bishop who could take up the position which the Bishop of Salisbury has assumed towards the creed of S. Athanasius; who could defend from his place in Convocation the sacrilege involved in "Westminster Communion"—a sin still crying for atonement—who could speak of the Holy Eucharist as the "sacred food that *conveys* the spiritual participation of," &c. ("Charge," 1873, p. 41); could hardly be expected to say much in favour of the sacrament of confession. Yet of the "matter Divinely permitted," which "ought not to be entirely put down by the Church of England," Dr. Moberly, the Bampton Lecturer of 1858, could speak thus: "In the time of heavy and dangerous sickness—in the time when death seems to be impending, when the conscience is likely to be burdened with weighty matters lightly regarded, perhaps hardly remembered at all in the days of health and strength, when bodily and mental powers are enfeebled, and the heart is tempted to sink down and despair under the prospect of appearing immediately in the presence of the most Holy God with all its sins upon it—is the blessed comfort of the solemn confession to GOD in the presence of His priest, and the tender administration of GOD's Holy Word and promise crowned by the audible words of authorized and express absolution, not to be refused to the afflicted and dying sinner, humbly and heartily desiring it?" And he adds these burning words—words, rather, which sixteen years ago were burning; but which the after action of the speaker has sensibly cooled—to priests of the future, who hung upon the lecturer's oratory: "O let no shrinking from the honest and faithful use of the divinely descended powers that come to the Church and to her priest from the holy words and breath of CHRIST—let no base fears of worldly objection or scorn lead a priest of GOD to grudge to his dying brother the clear, outspoken and ringing words of holy absolution which the Church has put into his mouth, which the sad sinner humbly and heartily craves, which his faithful and full confession has earned! Do not mock the dying patient by reminding him that he too is a physician. Do not cheat the broken-hearted penitent by telling him that he is a priest himself. GOD has provided an express comfort for him in his extremity of distress. GOD has given to you, and to none but you, the very anodyne for his poor soul's pain. You are cruel, you are faithless, you are untrue to your holy calling and duty if, out of fear of man, you shrink from using it." Again: "In the Visitation Service, where the penitent . . . has made

special confession of his sins to Almighty GOD in the priest's hearing, so that the priest verily and with good ground believes that he has poured out the secrets of his heart in full and unreserved sorrow for his sins, there—on his own humble and hearty desire, the priest is bidden to speak without further reservation the sentence of absolution free and full, which the divine succession, that dates from the sacred breath and the holy words of CHRIST Himself, to which I have so often referred, empowers him to pronounce." ("Bampton Lectures," pp. 226—229.) And the same idea recurs in his lordship's late Charge: "I most thankfully believe that ever since the blessed Breath of the LORD was breathed upon the Apostles, and the sacred words of priestly delegation spoken to them . . . the Apostles as a Body, and that a Body to continue by perpetual succession even unto the very end of the world, did receive and do continue to possess the awful power then communicated to them; and . . . that besides other indispensable ways in which this power is to be exercised, it is effectual to the relief of the burdened consciences of individual people." ("Charge," July, 1873, p. 31.)

THE SAME ON FREQUENCY OF PRIVATE CONFESSION.

"It is plain from what I have said, that I do not regard the mere act of making private confession to a priest, and receiving absolution from him as otherwise than good and holy, so that it be done with the reservation that I have mentioned above." ("Charge," p. 37.) These reservations, however, are summarised below (p. 40) the following sentences: "Confession, occasional, restorative, when the direct access to GOD is or seems barred by weight of the burden of sin, she (the Church of England) allows and she teaches; confession regular, ordinary, repeated . . . is not her teaching." And yet, his lordship, as Dr. Moberly, the eloquent preacher on the "Sayings of the Great Forty Days" nearly thirty years ago, could write thus: "Our Church . . . laments her want of the godly discipline of primitive times; and lamenting does she not bid us . . . use whatever means our position in life may give us to bring about its restoration? . . . We have still the offer (Oh, that we would . . . use it oftener) of the benefit of private absolution. . . . The remaining privileges may have been withdrawn from us by our sins. It will be by humbly and carefully using those which we possess that we may hope for their restoration." (Discourse iii.) In the stead of the positive though ejaculatory advice of Dr. Moberly to use private absolution oftener, Bishop Moberly's indirect advice to a supposed penitent who desires to receive absolution again, may be gathered from what follows: "A wise clergyman would for the most part discourage his wish. He would remind him that he must learn to be guided by his own manly and well-instructed Christian conscience. . . . He would warn him against the feeble self-indulgence . . . of trusting to men. . . . And he would urge him to the faithful bravery of laying his trouble before GOD in secret." ("Charge," pp. 38 and 39.)

BISHOP ELLICOTT OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL'S SERMON
ON PRIVATE CONFESSION.

THE sermon of the bishop in his cathedral advanced two new arguments against confession which deserve to be placed on record. The arguments will appear from the following letters which were published in the "Guardian" shortly after the delivery of the sermon :

I. "In his recent sermon Bishop Ellicott asks the following question : 'If the hearing of confessions was to form the great part of the priest's office, was not the omission of all allusion to such a weighty duty in a service so explicit as the Ordination Service one of the most startling and inexplicable omissions that could be possibly conceived?' And he adds : 'These ministrations were plainly alluded to—the Word and Doctrine of CHRIST, the Sacraments, and Discipline—and yet not one word of confession.' Would it surprise his lordship to be informed that the Roman Service *De Ordinatione Presbyteri*, which I have carefully examined, is also chargeable with a similar 'startling and inexplicable' omission? It says : '*Sacerdotum oportet offerre, benedicere, præesse, prædicare, et baptizare*' ; but not one word about hearing confession. The argument, therefore, *ab silentio* against private confession falls to the ground."—A Prebendary of S. Ninian's, Perth."

II. The bishop is reported to have said : "It is of the greatest possible significance that (in the Second Book of Edward VI.) . . . the forms of public confession and absolution were placed at the beginning of the Service (Matins and Evensong) . . . to mark that they were designed to supersede the private confession and absolution which were sanctioned in the First Book." On this argument, to which the bishop attaches "the greatest possible significance," the Rev. J. C. Chambers remarks thus : "(1) His lordship does not take into consideration that the omission of a form of general confession and absolution was a defect in the Daily office of the First Book which needed a remedy. (2) Still less does he observe that, as the Reformers had already in the Communion Service of the First Book introduced a general confession and absolution, it is beside the mark to represent the further extension of this provision in the Daily office of the Second Book as having anything to do with hostility to private confession and absolution. . . . In fact, it merely supplied an obvious hiatus in the ritual. (3.) Nor does he take into account the fact that the Roman Church, which uses private confession and absolution, also has a form of general confession and absolution. Hence, the bishop's argument . . . falls to the ground. Falls to the ground—that is to say, as being a theory unsupported by any evidence in its favour. It might with as much reason be alleged that making confession in church with the congregation was a proscription of a confession in one's own chamber."

It is almost incredible that a bishop who has devoted much time and thought to critical researches and the balancing of evidence should commit himself to such untenable positions. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol's "startling and inexplicable omissions," and the addition to which his lordship attaches "the greatest

possible significance" will hereafter vie in notoriety with the dictum of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, as advised by the present Archbishop of Canterbury, that in the Second Book of Edward VI. "the prayer for consecration of the elements was omitted;" and with the argument "against the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation" supplied by "that famous rubric" in the Visitation of the Sick, which every student knows to be of pre-Reformation origin, though the fact was unknown to the (then) bishop. Perhaps the anonymous author of "Evidence as to the value of the dicta of Ecclesiastical Judges and Assessors in matters of fact," will add this case to his catena in a new edition of his fly-leaf.

BISHOP MAGEE OF PETERBOROUGH ON THE SUPPRESSION OF CONFESSION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

IN reply to "some resolutions passed at a meeting at Leicester," the Bishop of Peterborough wrote as follows (Nov. 13, 1873): "I doubt . . . whether the meeting had fully considered the especial difficulties which must beset any attempt to suppress an 'erroneous practice' of confession in a church which distinctly sanctions a certain kind and amount of confession, but which has not defined, with anything like legal precision, the limits which separate the practice which she sanctions from that which she rejects. I would ask those who complain most bitterly that the bishops have not at once suppressed an 'erroneous practice' of confession to consider how they themselves would frame that rubric or canon which while respecting the sacred right of every sin-burdened penitent to 'open his grief' to his pastor, would nevertheless enable a bishop to prevent that penitent from making, and his pastor from receiving—in the necessarily impenetrable secrecy of such an interview—that kind of confession which should go beyond either the letter or the spirit of the teaching and directions of our Church . . . In reply, therefore, to the third of the resolutions of your meeting, I beg to say that, under the existing state of discipline in our Church, I do not believe that I have the power to suppress the practice complained of in the preceding resolution."

BISHOP CLAUGHTON OF ROCHESTER ON CONFESSION IN THE CASE OF A PERPLEXED CONSCIENCE.

THE Bishop of Rochester has ceased to occupy the negative position towards confession which his lordship assumed in Convocation in May. In his late charge delivered in October, we are grateful to find so decided an episcopal testimony to the value of the sacrament of penance under ordinary conditions of sin in everyday life. With the experience "of a system of confession to a priest," the compilers of the Prayer Book, says the bishop, "directed their special attention" to "the case of a perplexed conscience." Let *him* come to me—"who cannot quiet; who requires comfort; who is so grieved for the greatness of some one sin, or the pressure of many, of a long course of sin persisted in against mercies and warning,

that he is afraid : or who requires counsel—there is some intricacy in his sin. For instance : he has married the sister of his deceased wife, or he has acquired large sums of money by trading upon another's downfall, to which I saw him tending, and did not say a word which might have saved him—'twas the man's own fault that he was ruined—these are the sins in which it is possible that a man whose conscience is awakened may not be quite clear what he ought to do. 'Put away this woman, who has borne me children ! When I overcame her first scruples by my importunity—told her there was no harm in what I solicited her to do—and now put her away ! I cannot unravel this knot ! I will go to my pastor—or if he seem scarce equal to the task . . . I will call upon some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word to help me.' Or, in the other case : 'I am told that I must make restitution . . . What shall I do in this case ? I grew rich by taking advantage of another's weakness. He is dead and gone : to whom shall I make restitution ? To his children ? He left no child. To some great charity ? Will this meet the case ? And what of mine own children, guiltless of my fault ?' A thousand questions arise." . . . And how does the Bishop of Rochester solve them ? As every bishop of the English Church is bound to solve them—by an appeal to the sacrament of penance. These are his lordship's words : "In such cases of a troubled conscience, the Church has clearly offered the help of a confessor." It is much to be wished that other members of the bench, in their Charges, would entertain similar cases of conscience, and might be led by the science of casuistry to the like conclusion. "There is yet another case," adds the bishop, "in which the Church has not, so to speak, offered the help of a confessor, but has required her ministers . . . to move a sick person to make a special confession of his sins, &c." viz., the case of a death-bed. (pp. 13—16.)

BISHOP TAIT OF LONDON ON SPECIAL CONFESSION OF SIN.

SIXTEEN years ago, in his primary charge as Bishop of London, the primate could thus write of confession to a priest : "The pastor who visits any member of his flock lying under dangerous sickness, if he finds the sick man to be troubled in conscience with any weighty matter, is directed to move him to make a special confession of his sins. . . . My reverend brethren, on this subject it is right that I should speak with great seriousness. Let each of us ask ourselves whether we are quite alive to our duties, and by God's help are becoming equal to them in this momentous intercourse which is often required between pastors and their people's souls. . . . A pastor in his dealings with sinners' consciences must indeed be very discreet and very reverent, but also he must not flinch from being faithful." (pp. 57—9). Surely the "special confession" of sin of 1858, which is earnestly commended by Bishop Tait, comes very near indeed to the "sacramental view of confession" of 1873, which by Archbishop Tait is severely condemned as "a most serious error ;" and to "sacramental confession," of which, in conjunction with the northern metropolitan, Archbishop Tait affirms that it has "no

place in our Reformed Church," and expresses his "entire disapproval," and his "firm determination to do all in (his) power to discourage." ("Reply to the Church Association Memorial," June 16th.)

BISHOP JACKSON OF LONDON ON CONFESSION TO A PRIEST.

THE Bishop of London once used these words on the duty of private confession of sin : "There are cases in which it is the penitent's duty, and others when it is his interest, to confess to man As ministers should be by their profession usually the best advisers in cases of conscience, and are, or ought to be, every penitent's ready and sympathising friends, so to them the stricken or perplexed soul will often have recourse. And thus there is a sense in which . . . confession to a priest . . . may express an edifying practice, and even at times a duty Confession to man ought in some cases to be added to . . . confession to GOD." ("Repentance," Sermon iii.) Again: in his answer (July 21, 1873), to Mr. Howarth of S. George's, Hanover Square, his lordship writes as follows: "It may be called confession, when parishioners resort occasionally to their pastor in private for his advice, assistance, and prayer in their difficulties; and when, to enable him to give them his aid, they lay before him their doubts, sorrows, temptations, or sins. In this sense most clergymen are called upon to hear confessions." Again, referring to the exhortation in Office for Holy Communion, his lordship says: "In these exceptional circumstances, confession, or opening one's grief to the priest, is allowed." Again he writes thus: "Laymen may do much to discourage auricular confession by not sending their children to schools, however good the education, in which it is practised, and by not taking them to churches, however beautiful the service, in which it is taught; by expressing their disapprobation of it gravely, but without exaggeration and hard words which provoke a reaction; but, above all, by teaching in their families, and exemplifying in their lives that sober, cheerful piety which," &c. Can the laity really believe that our bishops hold confession of sin to a priest to be soul-destroying when, in replying to an address praying for episcopal action on the matter, such advice as the above is given to laymen as an apology for episcopal inertness?

CERTAIN BISHOPS ON HABITUAL CONFESSION.

THE judgment of one who was second to none of the bishops who spoke in Convocation for intellectual power, may fitly be quoted against the Bishop of Peterborough's implied opinion. Though himself disapproving the practice of "habitual confession," and believing that the Church "seems to discourage such a practice," the late Bishop (Phillpotts) of Exeter writes to Mr. Prynne thus: "As I do not think that the Church of England prohibits your receiving to confession those who seek it as an habitual practice, I do not presume to prohibit your doing so." ("Confession and Absolution," p. 43.) And again more strongly: "This is a matter which the Church leaves open to the discretion of her members, both lay

and clerical:" and once more, "the clergy may discourage, but I do not think they can refuse the *habitual* application to them to receive confession." (Ibid., p. 25.) The italics are in the original. Even the Bishop of London admits that in the matter of repressing "auricular confession" his power is very limited. The practice of habitual confession, his lordship adds in his letter to Mr. Howarth ("Guardian," August 6th,) "could with difficulty, if at all, be made the subject of legal proceedings." The Bishop (Fraser) of Manchester is not more hopeful of any prospective legislative measures to stop the course of confession in the Church of England. In his reply to certain resolutions passed at an Anti-Confessional Meeting at Birmingham, his lordship says (August 1): "I do not, however, myself see how, consistently with the principles of religious freedom, such an evil (as sacramental confession), if it exists, or even if it threatens to spread, can be remedied by enactment of law. I am even a little afraid—my fears being the result of experience—of the reactionary consequences of any violent agitation against it. The sources of the evil lie at a greater depth than can be reached by law, or by the resolution of a public meeting, or by the authority of bishops." With this opinion the Bishop of Salisbury agrees: "I do not say that if the priest were to yield to (a penitent's) request, or even if, time after time, he were to receive him to confession, and give him private absolution, he would be literally breaking any law of the Church of England that I know of; but I distinctly think that he would be acting in contravention to its spirit and its teaching." ("Charge," 1873, p. 39.) The opinion of the Bishop (Goodwin) of Carlisle (pp. 35, 36), and the words of the Bishop (Magee) of Peterborough (p. 29), have been quoted above. The Bishop (Ollivant) of Llandaff in "an Address" to his archdeacons and rural deans lately published, writes thus: "The present cry is against habitual confession. But even against *habitual* [*sic*] confession however abominable . . . what is the legal definition of *habitual*, and what positive law is there that makes habitual confession punishable? It is very easy to say that the Church of England discourages it. I believe she does. But that is not forbidding it." The opinion of the "Guardian," valuable only as showing what many amongst what may be termed the "moderate" party think and feel, may here be quoted: "There are certain propositions respecting these notices (of confession in the Prayer Book) which few will deny, except under the pressure of argumentative necessity. 1. They both deal with confession as preparatory to absolution. . . . 4. As there is no allusion one way or the other to habitual confession, so every individual is left to determine according to his own conscience what manner or amount of scruple, large or small, habitual or occasional, is sufficient in his case to call for the intervention of a priest. . . . The argument that, in recommending confession under certain circumstances, the English Church prohibits it under all others, only requires refutation, because some respectable persons have been found to use it. The truth is, it confuses permission with advice. Advice is limited to the occasion of it, and no *more* implies prohibition than expresses it."

ARCHBISHOP THOMSON OF YORK ON CONFESSION.

THE speech of the Archbishop of York in the House of Lords on this subject is too remarkable to be overlooked. His grace is reported to have said: "It is worthy of recollection that this question (Confession) had been brought forward on the 1st of April, 1851, when a petition signed by 260,000 was presented. . . . Twenty-two years had elapsed. . . . Yet it was strange that at the present time exactly the same state of facts appeared to exist." With all respect for his grace's undoubted powers, it would appear that "the same state of facts" does not appear to exist. In 1851, 260,000 signatures were attached to the petition in question. In 1873, after months of agitation and touting for signatures from nominal Churchmen and actual Nonconformists, only 60,000 signatures are the result of a similar petition. In other words, judged by the archbishop's own selected standard—a standard which few would be disposed to accept—there is a balance of 200,000 names in favour of the results of the Catholic Revival after a period of two-and-twenty years' work in England.

WANT OF UNANIMITY IN THE UPPER HOUSE, MAY 9TH.

THE debate in the Upper House does not seem to have been conducted with that unanimity of feeling and harmony in tone which the speeches of the primate and the Bishops of London and Bangor, and the unctuous words of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol would seem to indicate. 1. It is not clear, though the matter cannot now be decided, that the interpretation placed on the late Bishop of Winchester's words (above quoted, page 32) by the archbishop was the true interpretation. From the bishop's second speech it is probable that it was not. 2. The Bishop of Chichester distinctly utters his *gravamen*: "It is too much the case in this room, that those who are not junior in age but are junior in position have not those opportunities of speaking which are most amply afforded to those who are of greater experience and length of service, but who after all are . . . (in) . . . the same position as the lowest member of the bench." 3. The Bishops of Winchester and of Gloucester and Bristol take exception to their brother of Salisbury's "strong" language. 4. The Bishop of London "cannot agree with the Bishop of Salisbury that special action should take place." 5. The Bishops of Peterborough, Rochester, and Gloucester and Bristol, entirely dissented from the opinions of the primate and the Bishop of Salisbury on the question of licensing confessors; and the Bishop of Winchester appeared to agree with the first-named prelate. 6. The Bishops of London and S. Asaph are directly at issue as to whether the Church of England does or does not supply "the want of spiritual aid." 7. The archbishop and the Bishop of Oxford were not in accord also on the questions both of the confessions of "undergraduates," and also of the parish priest being confessor in the first instance. 8. And the Bishop of Chichester took exception to the action of

60 *Confession in the Church of England.*

the House *ab ovo*: "I entirely doubt the wisdom of it." These are not the only differences of episcopal opinion which might be quoted. Moreover the conditional qualifications under which confession is advocated by bishops of the English Church have not been exhausted in the text, and prove a further want of episcopal unanimity. Careful study of the debate would show that the Bishops of Peterborough, Salisbury, and Bangor would sanction neither "habitual" nor "compulsory" confession; that the Bishop of Rochester would sanction confession when not "publicly preached and impressed upon the young from the day of their confirmation onward;" that the Bishop of Llandaff would tolerate it if not employed by "Sisters of Mercy" and "penitents;" that the Bishop of Ely would not object to confession if it be not received by "a young and inexperienced man setting himself up as a general confessor for people of tender age and great weakness of character;" that the Bishop of Oxford would patronise confession if only we could "banish the young women and relieve the young men," or if only "young women" were prevented "from going to young clergymen for any private direction of any kind."

THE BISHOPS' ANSWER, A "DISAPPOINTMENT" AND "WORSE."

"A DISAPPOINTMENT" (pp. 44, 45,) for did not the primate with more than archiepiscopal plainness, and with less than archiepiscopal graciousness, declare that "his advice" to his suffragans was, "that if you do take them (the items of the petition) into consideration at all, you should do so with the view of most distinctly condemning them, and of telling these persons (his grace's inferior clergy) that you have no intention whatever of giving them the slightest encouragement in any one of the matters which they bring before you." And did not the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol with equal decision, and not more courtesy, say that "it would be neither proper nor possible to give licences for anything like that which these petitioners request:" and the Bishop of Rochester, that instead of licensing, he would "be rather disposed to think how (he) could restrain a practice which is . . . so rapidly extending"? The scant civility of the bishops to their clergy stands in marked contrast to the fulsome deference which is paid to the Church Association by the two archbishops. Compare the above language with what follows: "We have carefully considered the memorial;" "When we had the honour of receiving you;" "We promised a more careful answer;" "We have been prevented by many and pressing duties;" (from replying). Fancy an Anselm or a Laud using such language to a body of men who appealed to their archbishops to abolish "what they designate as 'sacramental confession.'" The opinion of the "Guardian," a paper not favourably inclined to the petition of the 483, upon the archbishops' reply, is worth placing on record: "The reply is no reassuring to those who sincerely desire for the episcopate a more real share in *guiding the course of religious movements in the Church*. If the archbishops had *nothing more* to say than this, it would have been better, both for their credit and

their influence, to have said much less. Their high position at the head of this great historic Church of England, and the duties which they owe to all its interests and all its members, might have made them hesitate about giving a formal and deferential reception and reply to a very impertinent address from an extreme and violent partisan society, whose proceedings have certainly not tended either to peace or edification. But if they did reply at length, it certainly was due to their place to have avoided the language of timidity, of vague but strong dislike, and conscious want of power."

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

PERHAPS the terminology of the petition may be open to exception on this point. "The Sacrament of Penance" would have been more theologically exact than "Sacramental Confession:" yet no less an authority than Archbishop Laud has given his sanction to the term in an official document. In his concluding remarks on the debate the archbishop (Tait) is reported to have said, that he was glad that all his right reverend brethren "state with the utmost distinctness that they consider the sacramental view of confession as a most serious error;" and also, a little later, that he "did not quite at the moment know what was meant by sacramental confession." In spite of the phrase not being strictly theological it is remarkable not only that Bishop Overall employed the phrase, but also that he assented to the practice which the phrase imports. Bishop Overall was the author of the sacramental portion of the Church Catechism. Perhaps, if attention were directed to such an authority, the Bishop of Oxford, if not the Archbishop, would modify his views as to the condemnation of "what is called 'sacramental confession.'"

DESERTERS FROM THE 483.

THE action of the deserters from the 483 (p. 12) has been sufficiently criticised in the public prints. Of course desertion always prejudices the cause which is forsaken. But in the present case, these unlucky clergymen who advertised themselves to the contempt, not of their brethren, but of the world, have been more their own enemies than ours. It may be observed, however, after a careful search, through the "Guardian" newspaper, that not more than eleven priests can be found who have publicly withdrawn their names from the petition. Their names can be produced if necessary. Meanwhile, as many clergymen were prepared to sign the petition had they had the opportunity, these few priests may be consigned to oblivion, without prejudice to the cause which their inconsiderateness, incompetence, or moral cowardice tended to injure.

**"HABITUAL, IS EQUIVALENT TO COMPULSORY CONFESSION,
AND IS UNHOLY, ILLEGAL, AND FULL OF MISCHIEF."**

THE Bishops of Winchester and of Gloucester, both demurred to the "extremely strong" language of their right reverend brother of Salisbury on confession. The Bishop of Carlisle, in a recent sermon entitled "Confession," which contains much in favour of the sacrament, says: "It should be observed that in the late petition . . . there is no hint of a desire to render confession compulsory." And his lordship adds, "It is undoubtedly a fact, think of it and deal with it as we may, that confession is assuming a position in the minds of many devout persons very different from anything which was known in our Church fifty years ago. We cannot get rid of the fact by being angry about it; what we ought to do is, rather to guide and influence opinion by sober discussion and wise counsel." Further, in the dedication to his clergy the bishop says: "I have thought it wise, and indeed my duty, at this time, when so many violent and (it may be) foolish things are being said on this side and that, to put forward that which appears to me to be a fair and honest statement of the doctrine of the Church of England." It is noteworthy that his lordship preached in avowed reference to the late debate.

BISHOP SELWYN OF LICHFIELD ON THE CONFESSION OF THE YOUNG.

AT the opening of S. Chad's College, Denstone, the Bishop of Lichfield is reported to have said: "The Church of England does not require . . . does not encourage confession, but under certain circumstances permits it. . . . I do not see why young, intelligent, thoughtful, religious-minded lads of 16, 17, or 18, should not have, if they really want it, that comfort which the Church of England provides for her members." ("Guardian," Aug. 13, 1873.)

BISHOP HAROLD BROWNE OF ELY ON AURICULAR CONFESSION.

AT the Ely Diocesan Conference (as reported in the "Guardian," July 16th, 1873) the bishop spoke as follows: "The question which has attracted much attention is the revived practice of auricular confession. I hardly know how to express myself otherwise than I have expressed myself already in a book published twenty years ago. Nothing has ever occurred to change my feelings concerning it. At the risk, therefore, of nearly repeating myself, I will only say that I hold it to be the duty of every Church to provide for the sin-stricken conscience the power of unburdening itself to the church's minister, and of receiving counsel and consolation." Referring to the work in question, we find that on "penance," the bishop, after quoting the Augsburg Confession "that it is right to retain private absolution in the Church," and Calvin's recommendation of "both private confession to a pastor and private absolution, when needed for the remedy of any special in-

firmity"—writes thus : " Our own reformers appear to have taken the same wise and moderate view. Ridley, the greatest light of the English Reformation, writes shortly before his death : ' Confession unto a minister . . . indeed I ever thought might do much good in CHRIST's congregation, and so, I assure you, I think even to this day.' So the Homily of Repentance . . . says ' I do not say, but that, if any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned pastor.' " The bishop next quotes from the exhortation before communion and the Visitation of the Sick, and adds : " Thus the Church of England provides for all troubled consciences the power of relieving themselves, by making confession of guilt to their pastor, or ' any other discreet and learned minister.' " Further on the bishop observes that certain well-known texts have " been ever considered as a ground for the practice continued in the Church of England, that the sick should be especially visited by the clergy, (and) should be moved to confession of sins ; " and adds : " There can be no doubt, that a distressed conscience may be soothed and guided by confidence in a spiritual adviser," together with the sentiment repeated by his lordship at Ely, that " the Church should always afford to the sin-stricken soul the power of unburdening itself. " (" Exposition of the XXXIX Articles," pp. 586-7.)

BISHOP ELLICOTT OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL ON THE EVIDENCE OF " AN ANCIENT WRITER " ON CONFESSION.

As these sheets are passing through the press, the following extracts from letters in the " Guardian " by the Rev. James Skinner, are worthy of reproduction.

I. " May I respectfully ask for the name of the ' Ancient Writer ' whose ' succinctly expressed " sentiment, according to the Bishop of Gloucester, represents the teaching of the Church of England upon the subject of confession : ' I say not that thou shouldest confess thy sins to thy fellow-servant ; tell them to GOD, Who will cure them.' " S. Augustine, continues Mr. Skinner, " is a very ' ancient writer.' He is of unquestioned authority in the Catholic Church. But he asserts the direct contrary of the sentiment ' succinctly expressed ' by Bishop Ellicott's nameless authority : ' Let no one say—I repent in secret ; I repent to GOD : GOD knows, who will pardon me because I repent in my heart. Has it, therefore, been said without a cause—Whatever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven ? Have the keys, therefore, without a cause been given to the Church of GOD ? Do we frustrate the Gospel ? Do we frustrate the words of CHRIST ? ' " (*Sermo.* 362. Ben. Ed.) It is due to us to have the opportunity of measuring the balance of authority between these two ancient writers. Who is the ' ancient writer ' thus pitted against S. Augustine, in the diocese of Gloucester ? " This question was published in the " Guardian " of Dec. 17. Prior to the issue of the paper in the following week Mr. Skinner appears to have been favoured by a clergyman, inspired or not by the bishop, with a reply to his inquiry.

II. On the receipt of this reply, Mr. Skinner writes again, as follows : " It would appear that the passage occurs in the spurious commentary on Psalm 1.

attributed to S. Chrysostom ; but that, in quoting it, the Bishop of Gloucester has omitted the very important words the equivalent to which I print in italics ; 'Do I say that thou shouldest expose thy sins to thy fellow-servant *to cast them in thy teeth ?* Tell them to GOD; Who will cure them.' " On this Mr. Skinner remarks, "I. If the bishop chose this 'ancient writer' deliberately, reading his actual words in the original Greek, and taking them fairly to represent the mind of the Church of England on confession, it would have been better 1. so to have quoted them fully ; 2. to have admitted that the context requires the words to be taken as in no way dealing with the question of confession to a *priest*, but as a protest against the necessity of a public exposure of sin in order to its forgiveness, and as an exhortation to the habitual confession to GOD, in secret, of those sins which have been already forgiven ; and 3. to have frankly owned that the 'ancient writer' is of no value whatever. II. If the bishop, as is probable, took the passage second-hand from Bishop Jeremy Taylor's 'Dissuasive from Popery,' it would have been better, even so, to have quoted Taylor's translation as he gives it ; for he does not leave out the words omitted by the Bishop of Gloucester, but renders them 'who upbraids not.'" Mr. Skinner concludes : "The exact value of that too 'succinct' proposition of 'an ancient writer,' for the purpose of exhibiting the mind of the Church of England on confession, has now been ascertained."

BISHOP OLLIVANT OF LLANDAFF ON THE REPORT OF CONVOCATION.

THE Bishop of Llandaff in "an Address" lately published has thus spoken of the Report of the Upper House (printed on page 49) : "To that report I gave my assent, but at the same time I did not conceal my opinion that it appeared to me scarcely to say sufficient on the side of *permissible* [*sic*] confession. . . . It does not notice the 113th Canon, which expressly provides that if any man confess his secret sins to the minister for the unburdening of his conscience, he is not to make known to any person whatever any crime so committed to his trust. . . . Neither does it allude in any way to the Sermon on Repentance in the Second Book of the Homilies, as I think it might very properly have done." The bishop had before quoted the words of the Homily : "I do not say but that, if any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor . . . and show the doubt of their conscience to them, &c." The Church of England then, continues the bishop, "not only does not absolutely prohibit private confession, but under certain peculiar circumstances she recognises, recommends, and protects it" (pp. 17 and 13).

"JURISDICTION IN THE CONFSSIONAL" (p. 32).

A LEARNED pamphlet under the above title, the substance of a paper read before the Society of the Holy Cross, has lately been published by its author, the Rev. E. G. Wood (Knott). At the present juncture the paper is of special value.





